

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST MARGARET'S NURSERY SCHOOL**

New Barnet

LEA area: Barnet

Unique reference number: 101254

Headteacher: Mrs J Scott

Reporting inspector: Mrs T Chakraborti  
12603

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> February 2002

Inspection number: 230667

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 - 5
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Margaret Road New Barnet Herts
Postcode:	EN4 9NT
Telephone number:	020 8449 5466
Fax number:	020 8449 9216
Appropriate authority:	LB Barnet LEA
Name of chair of governors:	Miss B Maltby
Date of previous inspection:	24 <sup>th</sup> March 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Area of learning responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
12603	Tusha Chakraborti	Registered inspector	Personal, social and emotional development	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
8991	Pamela Goldsack	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?
20523	Diana Bateman	Team inspector	Language and literacy Physical development Creative development	How well are pupils taught?
5565	Bimla Thakur	Team inspector	Mathematical development Knowledge and understanding of the world	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4 - 7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>8 - 9</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>9 - 10</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>11 - 13</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>13 - 14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>14 - 15</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>16 - 18</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>19 - 24</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Margaret's Nursery School is the largest nursery school within the London Borough of Barnet for 84 boys and 74 girls between the ages of three to five. One hundred and sixty one children attend the school, 122 of these part-time and 39 on a full-time basis. This is equivalent to a full-time roll of 100 children. The school is oversubscribed and has a long waiting list. Nearly all children are three to four years old. Most leave at the age of four, having spent an average of three terms in the school. The school remains under the control of the local education authority and does not have a delegated budget. There are 23 children learning English as an additional language, 11 of whom are just beginning to learn English. Thirteen children have special educational needs and two of these have statements of special educational needs. Six out of 35 children who attend full time, are eligible for free school meals. Three children entered the school and five left at times other than the normal time of leaving or entry. Children's attainment on entry to the school is average, compared to children of similar age.

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

The school provides a very positive learning environment and meets the personal and social needs of children well. As a result, children achieve well. The school has a very good range of resources which promotes children's independent learning effectively. By the time children leave the school they have achieved standards that are above those expected of children of a similar age in personal and social development and physical development and in line with the expected level in all other areas. The leadership and management of the school are good. Teaching across the school is good and staff work effectively as a team to move the school forward. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The children attain good standards in personal and social development and physical development.
- Children's behaviour is very good and has a positive impact on the progress they make.
- Relationships between the staff and children and between children themselves are very good.
- The leadership of the school and its management are good and committed to achieving good standards in all areas of school life.
- The school's provision for promoting children's social and cultural development is very good.
- The school has developed an effective partnership with parents which makes positive contributions to children's learning.
- The school has very good resources which have a very positive impact on its learning environment and support children's independent learning well.

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

- The quality of teaching is not monitored efficiently and consistently.
- Short-term curriculum planning is not consistent and does not support children's learning effectively.
- Higher attaining children are not challenged sufficiently.

*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. Since that time, it has made sound improvement in its provision. In response to the key issues identified in the last inspection, appropriate assessment procedures have now been developed, although their use in informing curriculum planning is not yet firmly established. Children are given sufficient opportunity to choose activities which develop their independent learning skills well. However, higher attaining children are still not challenged sufficiently

and whole school approach to planning does not yet ensure that all children can build on their earlier learning progressively.

## STANDARDS

Most children leave the school when they are four years old. By that time they achieve standards that are above those expected for children of a similar age in personal, social and emotional development and physical development. In all other areas of the curriculum, standards are average. The majority of children make good progress overall as a result of the good learning opportunities and very caring ethos of the school. Girls and boys achieve equally well. Children who have special educational needs make good progress in relation to their previous attainment. The few children who are learning English as an additional language make good progress in their learning and achieve well. Higher attaining children make satisfactory progress but not as much as they could.

## CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children have good attitudes to their work. They are eager to take part in all activities and concentrate well.
Behaviour	Children's behaviour is very good at all times, both in the classrooms and outdoors. They relate to each other very well and work and play together co-operatively.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Children show a high level of independence when selecting resources and carrying out activities. Relationships between children and adults and between children themselves are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory even though it is not a statutory requirement for children of this age.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	
Sessions seen overall	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good overall, half of the lessons being good or better. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The quality of teaching for children's personal, social and emotional and physical development is consistently good. The quality of teaching for communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development is satisfactory. All staff including teachers, nursery nurses and learning support assistants are knowledgeable and provide a wide range of activities to promote a child centred learning approach whereby children, themselves, independently select their own areas of learning. Weekly lesson plans do not always clarify sufficiently what and how the children are expected to learn and how they are going to be supported in their learning. The quality of teaching for children with special educational needs is good. They are well integrated into the nursery and also receive additional help in individual or small groups according to their assessed needs. Teaching for children with English as an additional language is also good. When children enter the nursery, they are supported well in groups in or out of the classroom as required.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad balanced curriculum, in line with the national objectives in Early Learning Goals.
Provision for children with special educational needs	Good. Children's needs are identified and met well through individual programmes of work. They are fully integrated into the daily classroom activities.
Provision for children with English as an additional language	Children who are learning English as an additional language are supported well in class or in small groups. They are well integrated in classroom and outdoor activities.
Provision for children's personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision for this area. Children are encouraged to reflect upon their actions and consider how they affect others. The provision for social and cultural development is very good and that for spiritual and social development good.
How well the school cares for its children	The school cares for its children well. All staff know children well and ensure that they feel safe, secure and happy.

The school works well in partnership with parents, enabling them to support their children's learning at home.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction for its work and she is well supported by the deputy headteacher and other members of staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors do not have the same statutory responsibilities as the governors in schools for children of statutory school age. They are well informed about all aspects of school life and provide good support for the headteacher and staff.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school reviews and evaluates its performance satisfactorily through its improvement plan and plans further school improvement, based on this.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes effective use of its staff, accommodation and resources in its aim to provide good quality education for all its children.

The accommodation and learning resources are very good and have a positive impact on children's learning. The school has an adequate number of staff and they are suitably trained. It does not have a delegated budget but the governors apply the principles of best value effectively whenever possible.



## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children like school.</li><li>• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible.</li><li>• Children are making good progress.</li><li>• The teaching is good.</li><li>• The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best.</li><li>• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school.</li><li>• The school promotes good behaviour.</li><li>• The school works closely with parents.</li><li>• Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress.</li><li>• The school is led and managed well.</li></ul>	

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. The team found that the children are provided with a range of activities throughout the day as an integral part of the school's curriculum and, therefore, judge that the provision is good.

## **B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. The attainment of children on entry to the school is broadly average. Children achieve standards that are average overall by the time they leave the school, which in most cases, is at the age of four. They achieve standards that are above average for this age group in physical development, which represents an improvement over the previous inspection. Standards in personal, social and emotional development are also above average and those in all other areas of the curriculum are average, as at the time of the previous inspection. Children make good progress as a result of the good curriculum and very caring ethos of the school. Girls and boys achieve equally well. Children who have special educational needs make good progress in relation to their previous attainment. The few children who are learning English as an additional language make good progress and achieve satisfactorily. Higher attaining children do not make the progress of which they are capable.
2. Children achieve good standards in their personal, social and emotional development. They develop independent learning skills quickly and make their selection of activities, books, toys and equipment confidently. They relate very well to each other and the staff and are friendly and welcoming to visitors. They are good at supporting each other in learning, such as reading books and outdoor play activities. Standards are also good in physical development. Children successfully select from a range of materials and use cutting, joining and building skills to make cars, houses and castles. They are adept at using tools such as hammers and saws and demonstrate the ability to handle these tools with safety and control. They are confident in using outdoor play equipment and show growing awareness of space.
3. Standards are average in communication, language and literacy. Children listen well and respond confidently during story time. They recognise that pictures and text convey meaning and choose books confidently to share with their parents at home. Most children recognise their names printed on labels in small storage boxes, which they use totally independently to label their own work. Some children have good experiences of reading and have created their own books about owls. In mathematics, standards are in line with those expected for children of a similar age. Children count reliably to ten using everyday objects; some count to 12. Most four-year-olds recognise numerals 1 to 5 and use these to match the corresponding number of objects or dots. They sort different shapes and objects according to their size and shape and match them with identical objects.
4. Most children attain standards that are expected for this age in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world and some exceed them. Children observe and enjoy exploring their environment. They enjoy using their magnifying glass to observe living things closely, such as mini beasts. They explore the properties of different types of magnets, without being supported by an adult, and find out which magnets can attract more metallic objects. Children attain standards in creative development that are in line with children of the same age. They make good models, using recyclable materials, such as cardboard boxes, glue and scissors to make a boat. They produce pictures, patterns and models using a range of materials. They enjoy painting, using both paintbrushes and, at times, their hands, to explore and recognise different colours. They explore musical instruments and enjoy singing, participating in actions that accompany the songs. The long-term planning shows that children are offered the opportunity to respond to music using dance.

#### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

5. Children have good attitudes toward all areas of school life and these have been maintained since the last inspection. Children are confident when they arrive for each session and follow routines easily. All are able to select their name card and then add it to the display board with their classmates. Even the youngest children say goodbye to their departing parents without delay and then join in activities. Parents who expressed their views during the inspection all

agree that their children like school. Children respond well to the wide range of activities available to them and are able to join in small groups or work on their own happily. A good example was when one boy decided to make a picture by gluing feathers onto a card; he selected and pasted a card pre-printed with his name and placed his artwork on a drying rack. He then decided to join in with a small group, painting pictures.

6. The children's behaviour continues to be very good. They listen well to adults and to each other and this helps to support their learning and build up their confidence. Children are kind to each other. This contributes to the positive atmosphere in classrooms and helps the youngest children to settle securely into school life. Storytime is very popular. Here children can sit for an extended period and then imaginatively add their own predictions with great excitement and enthusiasm. Outdoors, children play very well and display self-discipline. They enjoy climbing, riding tricycles and games in the playhouse with only indirect supervision from members of the staff. Children are able to express their opinions in front of the class or within groups. They treat toys, books, displays and other resources with care. Parents are very pleased with the quality of their children's behaviour at school.
7. The children's personal development and relationships in school are very good and this is in line with the last inspection. They enjoy the company of all members of staff and each other. Children who have special needs are full members of their class and are included in activities as a matter of routine by their classmates. Children are able to take turns productively either when they play together or work with teachers. For example, every day each child has a turn cutting up fruit before the class take their seats to share this snack with a drink. Children enjoy role-play very much and both boys and girls do not hesitate to play with woodworking equipment or cookery items. More able children show great interest in books and can browse through them and make comments about the pictures. Children and their parents make good use of the lending library.
8. Attendance is satisfactory even though it is not a statutory requirement for children of this age. The same judgement was made in the last inspection. Registers are kept open for the first half-hour of each session as some children arrive within this time.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

9. The quality of teaching is good overall. During the inspection, half the sessions were good or better. No part of any session was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching for children's personal, social and emotional development including support for behaviour, special educational needs and English as an additional language is consistently good. The quality of teaching for communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development is satisfactory. The quality of teaching has been sustained at the same level as the last inspection.
10. All staff, including teachers, nursery nurses and learning support assistants, understand how young children learn and how to teach them. Together, they form an effective team with a philosophy of equal delegation of responsibilities including observations and leading individual sessions, with all staff having the role of being a teacher. They provide a wide range of activities to promote a child centred learning approach whereby children themselves select their own areas of learning independently. These activities satisfactorily promote children to learn through planned experiences and activities, which are achievable.
11. The quality of teaching for children with special educational needs is good. They are well integrated into the nursery and also receive additional help as individuals or in small groups. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of these children's physical and emotional needs, support them effectively to learn and ensure that they make good progress. Learning support teachers and assistants effectively record their observations of children, which they use satisfactorily to plan for these children's next stage of learning.
12. The quality of teaching for children with English as an additional language is also good. When children enter the nursery, they are helped to learn English in the way all young children acquire language. Children are given sufficient opportunities to listen to taped stories to support their

communication skills, both in English and in their home language. For example, children, who had a basic understanding of a story read in English, responded fluently and with great excitement in their home language when a teacher asked the whole class to predict which was a character behind a door. Playing with other children helps them to form friendships and learn English in a very practical way. Children at an early stage of learning English are supported effectively by the language support teacher in small groups.

13. The nursery nurses and teaching assistants teach well by talking with children to stimulate and nurture their learning. Staff use new vocabulary successfully to enhance children's language. All teachers have a sound knowledge of the Early Learning Goals.
14. Teachers' long and medium term planning is good and this is carefully displayed and shared with parents. However, weekly planning has some weaknesses. While good teaching is characterised by activities that are relevant and interesting to the children, within satisfactory teaching, weekly planning does not show how the activities are adjusted to reflect children's differing learning needs. The planning for individual sessions does not record what the children will learn from the main focus activities and it lacks a clear sense of purpose. It is unclear as to what children are expected to learn or how individual or groups of children will be supported. This results in dull and uninteresting activities for children, giving them very limited opportunity to interact and engage in purposeful learning. These activities do not enable children to enhance their intellectual or creative development. This also leads to ineffective use of time with some groups of children meeting together in walkway areas totally unsupervised.
15. Teachers have high expectations of the children's personal, social and emotional development. When teaching is good or better, the activities and questioning techniques make children think and reflect on their work and successfully develop and enhance their knowledge, skills and understanding in those areas of experience. In some lessons, however, there are low expectations of what children can do. Higher attainers are not challenged sufficiently in these lessons. As a result they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
16. All teachers manage pupils very well and high standards of behaviour are consistently ensured. There are very good relationships between all adults and children, which enable children to feel secure and promote trust between staff and children. All teachers make effective use of praise to encourage good behaviour. All these contribute effectively to enable new children to settle down into the nursery quickly.
17. Teachers are very supportive and caring and know each child and family well. They effectively provide opportunities for children to share books with their families at home. The use of the support staff is good when giving provision and resources for individual children with language or developmental needs. However, time is not always used effectively. At the start of each session parents appropriately bring their children into the nursery over a 30-minute period. This provides some children with only two hours of educational provision within each session.
18. There are appropriate procedures for assessing children's coverage of the curriculum. However, the system for tracking children's progress, especially against the 'stepping stones' is not sufficiently developed. As a result, more able children are not always challenged sufficiently. During the inspection it was unclear how the provision provided for four-year-olds was different to that provided for three-year-olds or even children who had only just joined the nursery within the past few days.
19. Overall, most children make good progress in their learning. Children learn the basic skills of literacy and numeracy well. They consistently show an interest in the activities even when these are not challenging. The home corner role play areas as well as other activities provide opportunities for creative and imaginative play and promote children's language development well. The good provision for physical development gives a variety of opportunities for children to learn effectively through their senses and movement, for example, children manipulating different sized balls. Where teaching is good or better, children are given the opportunity to acquire or reinforce new knowledge, skills and understanding. When teaching is only satisfactory, many do not learn as much as they should.

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

20. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of the children. It reflects well the aims of the school and contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum reflects the national guidance for children's learning in their early years. There is good emphasis on children's own choices of activities. Outdoor provision is very good and the planned outdoor activities promote all areas of learning. There is appropriate emphasis on developing children's language and literacy through a variety of activities and, through these, the application of mathematical and scientific ideas. Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted well through all areas of learning. Information and communication technology (ICT) is a priority area for development for the school and is presently used well to support the curriculum. Overall, the curriculum is of good quality. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its many curricular strengths and also made improvements.
21. The curriculum is extended through the provision of extended day facilities for the young children, using 'Wrap-Around Care'. Children are provided with breakfast, lunch and tea at the appropriate times. Small groups of children take part in additional activities during lunchtime, such as going to the park and feeding ducks, or going to the garden centre and buying plants for the school garden. These activities complement the school's curriculum.
22. The curriculum statement provides clear guidance on shared thinking about how the curriculum should be organised throughout the school. There is an effective approach to planning the curriculum, particularly in relation to activities that are intended over the long and the medium term, clearly indicating the learning intentions. There is an agreed structure for planning activities for the short term. Teachers plan for one day at a time and evaluate at the end of the day how successful they were in achieving their aims. This then helps them to select appropriate activities for the following day. However, to improve the quality of teaching, there is scope for improving the short term planning. For example, by making it more focused through including key questions that would be necessary for the adults to ask and key vocabulary that should be promoted to extend children's language and learning in different areas. Staff meet together each half term to share their planning and to exchange ideas that have worked well, which is proving useful.
23. The headteacher and the deputy head oversee the long and medium-term plans on a regular basis. This provides an effective check on breadth and balance of children's experiences over the long term in relation to the recommended areas of learning. The monitoring of planning on a short-term basis, however, is less effective in establishing the level of progress that has been made by children of different abilities.
24. The school constantly reviews its planning and assessment procedures and works together towards improving these. Planning has been revised since the last inspection and the learning intentions are now more focused. However, the day-to-day planning does not clearly indicate how more able children will be extended through the intended activities. This leads to a slower rate of progress for the more able children.
25. Governors are well informed about curricular developments in school through close personal contacts with it and through the headteacher's reports. There is a governor responsible for overseeing the provision for pupils with special educational needs, who has a good idea about how well children are progressing.
26. Children with special educational needs are well supported and their needs are met adequately through the additional support that is generally provided on an individual basis within the classroom. A special 'Sunshine Room' has also been created to provide a safe and attractive base for learning, where more specific individual support can be given. Children's needs are identified appropriately at an early stage and the individual education plans are devised with clear targets, based on children's specific needs. Individual education plans are monitored and reviewed appropriately. Children identified as having special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Senior members of staff have received some training from the Borough on the new Code of Practice. More school-based training is planned

for the near future, for the benefit of all members of staff.

27. There is a policy for equal opportunities, which is well implemented. There is equal access to the curriculum for all children, including those who speak English as an additional language. Provision is good for children speaking English as an additional language; consequently, they make good progress in developing confidence, self-esteem and in learning English. Boys and girls are encouraged to take an equal part in all activities.
28. The curriculum benefits from the very good contact with the community. This includes the local business community, which supports the school well with providing funds and resources. The school makes full use of these facilities. Students from local schools and training colleges use the school for their work experience and this also helps children with their learning.
29. There are established links with a number of feeder primary schools to which children transfer, thus preparing them well for the next stage of their education. Teachers and special needs support staff make visits to the prospective schools. Reception class teachers are also invited at appropriate times in the year to ease the transition. There are also links established with local special schools. For example, children go to the 'Acorn Assessment Centre' in Oakleigh School, where they use the soft play facilities and have a drink with others, thus learning to develop a respect for individual differences.
30. The curriculum is enhanced through visits to places of interest. Two classes visited the Science Museum to broaden their experiences. Walks are also arranged, for example, to the local fire station, the post office and, from time to time, to Hadleigh Wood, where children observe, for example, the changing colours of autumn leaves, the acorns and the wildlife. Visitors are also invited to the school to provide first hand experiences for the children. For example, a zoologist gave children good opportunities to learn about exotic animals, such as the scorpion, snake and the chinchilla. Recently, a policewoman came in to talk to the children, inviting them to visit the police station.
31. The provision for personal, social and health education is good. The provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Teachers help to develop attitudes and values consistent with the school's aims. Children are well settled, happy and confident and developing their independent learning skills well.
32. Provision for the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Provision for children's spiritual development is good and it is promoted through the curriculum. It is particularly evident in the learning environment created to support the different areas of learning. For example, multicultural resources and displays are particularly effective in teaching children how to appreciate the effect of art, and the existence of other faiths. Some lessons also provide good opportunities for the children to think deeply about their experiences. In a story session, children had good opportunities to wonder at stories that had been written by other children. Good opportunities for spiritual development are also provided through the 'Millennium Garden', where, for example, children look at books, mini-beasts and worms. Children grow plants in the vegetable patch and the greenhouse during the course of the year. They observe the growth of plants which results, at times, in awe and wonder.
33. Provision for children's moral development is also good. Teachers and other adults are good role models in how to treat others. Children use the garden area sensibly and show caring attitudes towards small creatures they find in the mini garden. They show good behaviour and there is a caring and friendly ethos throughout the school. They know that there are rules for specific activities, such as for working at the woodwork bench. They take good care of toys and their belongings, including school resources and equipment and are able to differentiate right from wrong. There are good opportunities to learn about caring for pets, for example, by observing and looking after the school's guinea pigs.
34. The provision for children's social development is very good, as noted in the previous inspection. The very good quality of relationships between members of staff helps to promote good relationships between children and with staff. Children are encouraged to work and play harmoniously together. They share their favourite toys and equipment and take turns during

their free activities. During the inspection, on a number of occasions, children were observed supporting one another in exploring the potential of games on the classroom computer. While playing outside, children show responsible attitudes and good behaviour. Children are encouraged to consider the needs of other people, who are more needy and helped to raise funds to support children in need. During Christmas, children visit local old peoples' homes, to deliver cakes and pies made in the nursery and sing Christmas songs for them.

35. Provision for children's cultural development is very good. The celebration of festivals, such as Christmas, Diwali, Hannukah and the Chinese New Year, is helping children to develop a good awareness of their own culture and other cultures reflected within the school community. They develop a good awareness of different life styles, values and beliefs, through participating in a wide range of activities, including multicultural cooking and the tasting of food. Dual-language storybooks in classrooms and colourful displays of ethnic artefacts and resources throughout the school reflect the rich diversity of the school community and the society at large. The display of newspapers in different languages, observed in two classrooms, was very effective and useful in helping children to appreciate the existence of print in many languages.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

36. Overall, the procedures for ensuring children's welfare and the arrangements for child protection are good and have improved since the last inspection. There are a number of well-written policies to guide staff regarding safe practices and these are reviewed and updated regularly by the headteacher and the governors. The headteacher is the named teacher in charge of child protection and is supported by the deputy headteacher. The school's own policy follows the guidance from the local authority. Information regarding procedures and regulations are reviewed with staff members regularly and all are sure of their roles. Statutory requirements in this area are fully met. Risk assessments of the site are carried out by both the staff and the governors' health and safety committee on a regular basis.
37. There is an appropriate number of staff trained to administer first aid. The needs of children with asthma or other ailments are well known and a good level of care is provided. However, there is no medical room and pupils are generally cared for in the staff room or in their classroom. There is no sink designated solely for first aid use.
38. Fire drills are carried out at least once per term. The school is clean and the grounds are well maintained.
39. Procedures for monitoring and promoting regular attendance are satisfactory and have improved since the last inspection. Attendance is recorded at the beginning of each session and registers are now monitored systematically. The school contacts families when children are absent for a few days with no explanation. The concerns about not being able to account for pupils' whereabouts that were expressed in the last inspection report have been resolved appropriately. However, the overall rate of attendance is not calculated as the local education authority does not require it.
40. As at the last inspection, there are good procedures in place to monitor and promote discipline. The staff members are consistent in their approach to behaviour management and children are praised and encouraged throughout the day. The good procedures for behaviour management are well supported by the high number of adults caring for the children and the very good relationships found within the school. Behaviour management is better indoors than outdoors. On the playground some staff members tend to oversee pupils and only intermingle with them when play becomes too boisterous. Any oppressive behaviour is dealt with effectively.
41. The procedures for monitoring and supporting the children's personal development are good. In the previous inspection they were judged as very good but the arrangements now in place do not meet that standard. Each class teacher maintains detailed records of pupils' personal progress and these encompass all areas of learning and are updated and referred to almost daily. Parents' own views of how their children are settling are also taken into account. Good support for development is enhanced by the staff members' good knowledge of the children as individuals and their commitment to provide a caring and supportive school day.

42. Procedures for assessing gains in knowledge, skills and understanding have improved since the last inspection and are now linked well to the early learning goals. There is now more consistency of practice in the way teachers record their assessment outcomes. Assessment generally informs teaching and has a good impact on the children's learning. Targets are set for all children to move forward their learning in the desired areas. Targets set at present do not always lead to a systematic development of skills, knowledge and understanding.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

43. The school continues to maintain its good links with parents. Parents value the efforts the school makes to maintain an effective partnership with them. Parents who expressed their opinions during the inspection have very positive views of this popular and oversubscribed school.
44. The partnership between home and school begins with the well planned induction programme for new children. Many parents welcome the offer for the new class teacher to visit their home in the weeks before their child starts at the nursery. Later on parents are asked to complete a survey about how well their child is settling into school.
45. The quality of information provided for parents is good. There is an informative school brochure and the headteacher sends out regular newsletters about school activities. There are display boards outside each classroom with current news and parents are welcome in school at all times.
46. The school values the views of parents. In response to their request, parents are now invited to meet with teachers before the end of their child's first term to discuss how each child has settled into school life. There is also a formal meeting at the end of the school year for parents and teachers to discuss the children's progress. Although not a statutory requirement, the school provides an end of year report to parents in essay style that gives an overview of their child's year in the nursery.
47. Parents continue to make a good contribution to children's learning at school and at home. A number of parents volunteer regularly to help with reading, cooking, storytelling and accompany children on class trips. The study of other cultures is extended when parents from different ethnic origins provide different types of food and tell stories in their home language. This also helps to bolster new pupils who have recently arrived from other countries. The annual Autumn Fayre is well supported by parents and this event raises a significant amount of money that helps provide additional resources for the school. The school has access to the local authority's translation service but the needs of the parents who do not speak English are usually met by the assistance of other helpful parents. Parents are invited to exchange library books every week. Parents who read to their children at home support attainment and extend the work of the school.

### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

48. The school is led and managed well. The headteacher provides good leadership and clear educational direction. She is supported very well by the deputy headteacher and other members of the staff. The school is successful in reflecting its aims and values well in creating a warm, welcoming and positive ethos in which children feel secure and happy and make good progress. The good quality leadership and management has a positive impact on the quality of education and the resources provided for the children. Assessment procedures have improved and are being implemented appropriately. There are revised policies for all areas of the curriculum. The quality of teaching is not monitored effectively. However, a plan for this has been devised recently but has not yet been implemented.
49. The management of the provision for the children with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator makes an effective contribution to overall management of the school, ensuring that staff work together as a team to meet the needs of each child. Effective links are maintained with outside agencies and regular contact is maintained with parents. The provision for the children learning English as an additional language is also managed well. These children



receive good quality support from the specialist staff, both in small groups and in classrooms, alongside other children.

50. The school being under the local education authority control, does not have a delegated budget or governors with statutory obligations. The governors support the school well and play an active part in its life. The Chair of Governors makes regular visits and supports the headteacher well. Governors are kept well informed about the school's work through detailed reports on a regular basis and, whenever possible, apply the principles of best value effectively.
51. The school's improvement plan evaluates the success in implementing the last year's plan effectively. It gives a strategic overview of the needs of the school for the current year and the areas for development are identified and prioritised appropriately. It is usefully linked to performance management and staff development. However, improving the quality of teaching further has not been identified as an area for development yet.
52. There are sufficient numbers of qualified teaching staff to meet the needs of children. Newly qualified teachers and new members of staff receive good support from the headteacher who ensures that the induction programme is consistently applied. The arrangements for the professional development of all staff are generally good.
53. The accommodation is spacious, attractive and well cared for. It provides a good learning environment for the pupils and allows teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. The outside areas provide very good opportunities for play, physical education and environmental studies. The school has a very good range of resources to meet the needs of all areas of the curriculum. Resources are clearly labelled and readily accessible to staff and pupils.
54. The headteacher and the school secretary work closely together, in liaison with the local authority officer, to check expenditure and to ensure that the school obtains the best value when purchasing resources. There is a thorough approach to financial planning and priorities in the school's improvement plan are costed effectively. Computers are used appropriately to support administration. The deployment of teaching and support staff is effective and ensures efficient management of the school. Resources are used well to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding in the areas of the curriculum. Good use is also made of visitors and outside visits to enhance pupils' learning. The school provides good value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

To raise standards further, the governors, headteacher, staff and local education authority should now:

- i. improve teaching further by implement the recently devised system for monitoring the quality of teaching ( paragraphs 15, 25, 49);
- ii. ensure that short-term planning supports children's learning by showing for each activity what and how children are to learn ( paragraphs 14, 24, 25); and
- iii. challenge higher attaining children effectively by developing systems for tracking children's progress and using this information to plan activities which help children to take their next step in their learning (paragraphs 1, 15, 18, 68).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of sessions observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	13	15	0	0	0
Percentage	0	6	44	50	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 three percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	97
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	13

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	23

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	

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)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	284

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

## **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	313654
Total expenditure	313419
Expenditure per pupil	3134
Balance brought forward from previous year	N/A
Balance carried forward to next year	N/A

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	158
Number of questionnaires returned	58

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	90	9	0	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	64	29	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	66	33	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	9	7	0	2	3
The teaching is good.	76	19	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	34	9	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	16	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	45	33	5	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	57	41	2	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	81	19	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	26	2	2	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	22	2	0	16

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

55. Children attain above average standards in their personal and social development when they leave the nursery. This includes children with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language. Most children leave at the age of four.
56. Children are likely to exceed the early learning goals in this area. Good procedures for introducing children to the nursery help them settle in happily. There is good support for parents to help them manage the transition from home to school and parents express a high level of satisfaction with their children's confidence and progress.
57. This area is given a high priority by all staff and there is a strong focus on increasing children's belief in their own abilities. As a result children learn to approach new activities and selecting new materials confidently. An example of this was the manner children were enthusiastically browsing in the book area and reading stories to each other. They often invite the adults in the classroom to read to or listen to them reading their favourite stories. Children show consideration for each other and take turns while working in pairs or groups. They show high levels of independence for instance, putting their name stickers to their paintings and use of equipment like scissors or a range of materials for making a collage. Children have good relationships with each other and the staff. High quality relationships between children and adults mean that they gain much in confidence. They show a good understanding of routines and expectations. They behave well, for instance they wait for a turn when playing a game or sharing musical instruments. Children show appropriate levels of concentration and persist with tasks such as measuring and sawing wood to make a picture frame. Children express their joy when taking part in acting out a story and spontaneously express their affection for and appreciation of their teacher. They have good opportunities to understand the beliefs and celebrations of other cultures and religions. For example they look at and respond positively to the items used in the celebration of the Chinese New Year. Higher attaining children think carefully about their answers. When they are given a 'free choice' from a number of activities, they are independent in choosing an activity, often sustaining their interest for a significant amount of time. They clearly gain much enjoyment from the activities and rich resources on offer.
58. Staff present good models of considerate and caring behaviour. They are sensitive to children's physical and emotional needs and are willing to give time to explaining how to resolve conflicts. Profiles of each child show that assessment in this area is thorough and document the progress each child is making.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

59. On entry to the nursery the children's communication, language and literacy standards are average when compared to children of a similar age. They make good progress and most pupils are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. Children with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language attain sound standards in relation to their earlier attainment and make good progress in developing language skills. In the previous Ofsted inspection standards for language and literacy were reported as being satisfactory and these standards have been sustained. Standards for speaking and listening were judged to be good for the majority of pupils but this inspection found that they have not been sustained, as standards for speaking and listening are now only satisfactory.
60. Teaching consistently provides appropriate opportunities for children to grow in confidence in speaking and listening skills. In conversation, both with one another and with teachers, children are provided with opportunities to take turns in speaking, listening and talking about their own

ideas. All parts of the curriculum are provided with a range of opportunities for children to develop their communication skills with teachers valuing talk. Children are able to understand and follow instructions, for example when they are asked if they wish to use the outdoor play area and follow instructions to put on their coats. When looking at a hamster they observe the animal's movements and make relevant comments and suggestions as to what it might like to do next.

61. Teachers show children how to use their own language to formulate their own ideas and develop thinking skills appropriately. When teaching is good or very good, teachers and nursery nurses, provide children with effective opportunities to develop and extend their speaking and listening skills. These opportunities successfully ensure that children enter into a productive and imaginative dialogue which provides them with a rich vocabulary. When teaching is satisfactory teachers do not always actively engage in conversations or discussions with children to enable them to extend their vocabulary. These missed opportunities have outcomes with children, at times, being passive learners.
62. Teachers, especially during the final whole class session, provide appropriate role models, while reading a story to children. When teaching is good or very good teachers use exciting story-telling techniques with the children sitting spellbound, for example, listening to a book called 'Shhhhhh', being read very expressively to them. This effectively enhances the children's understanding of stories and successfully stimulates their imagination. This also provides children with opportunities to predict missing words from a story. Children learning English as an additional language are encouraged to contribute both in English or in their own home language.
63. The very good jungle theme provision in the library and the range of fiction and non-fiction books in every classroom encourage children's early reading skills. Children are developing their awareness of knowing that pictures and text convey meaning and they are also able to choose a book to share with their parents and carers at home. All children have their names printed on labels in small storage boxes, which they use independently to label their own work. This successfully encourages even the very youngest children to recognise their name.
64. Some children have good experiences of reading and have created their own books about owls with teachers scribing the child's own stories into these books. The books are then effectively used during whole class sessions to increase all children's awareness of both language for reading and writing as well as supporting children's understanding of how text works. The use of a recipe, to make salt dough, successfully developed children's awareness of how writing is used to record meanings. Staff provide individual support for children by encouraging them to copy their names from cards.
65. Every class has appropriate provision for using pens and pencils for children to play and experiment with writing when mark making. They know that writing has a purpose and have participated in addressing envelopes that they have posted to themselves at the local post office. The display of newspapers, printed in a variety of languages and scripts other than English, helps children to understand how text is recorded within other cultures.
66. The use of pencils and pens to copy Chinese writing and the use of the computer to reproduce these symbols support children in understanding how individual letters of the alphabet are formed. Some children are beginning to make marks to record letters of the alphabet independently and some can write their own name.
67. All classrooms have an alphabet frieze, clearly displayed, for children to become more aware of words and letters within the environment. However limited opportunities are provided for children to begin to explore letters of the alphabet and their sounds. Teachers do not always have a full knowledge or understanding of the progress children are making in the areas linking sounds to letters, especially what they might have undertaken at home with their parents.

## Mathematical development

68. Standards of attainment in mathematics are as expected for children of this age. The majority makes satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals and is likely to reach these by the end of the Foundation Stage. During inspection, not many examples of above average attainment were seen. This suggests that attainment of higher attaining children is below what might be expected.
69. Children count reliably to ten using everyday objects, some count to 12. Most recognise numerals 1 to 5 and use these to match the corresponding number of objects or dots. They sort different objects according to their properties and match them with similar objects. Children are learning to understand the order of numbers to 10, through their counting activities, and through simple number rhymes, such as 'five little monkeys'. During a whole class session, children showed much enjoyment in singing their familiar number songs, indicating that they are beginning to understand the reverse order of numbers from 5 to 1. Teachers' records show that while experimenting with water, they explore the capacity of containers, although there is no indication of the type of mathematical language they might be using. In day-to-day activities, they learn to measure things, although, again, it is not clear from the children's records the type of comparative language they might be using.
70. Children have good opportunities to explore numbers, colours, shapes and sizes in a variety of contexts, both through indoor and outdoor activities. For example, through using the outdoor resources and equipment, such as wheels, tyres and building blocks children find out about the familiar two and three-dimensional shapes. Adults on duty outside help them to describe some of these shapes and use the related language.
71. The majority of children make good progress through a wide range of first-hand practical experiences. However, more able children do not always make the progress of which they are capable. This was also an issue identified in previous inspection. This is mainly due to the lack of a differentiated programme of learning for the more able children. Progress is good for children with special educational needs and for those who speak English as an additional language, due to the additional support that is available, often on a one-to-one basis.
72. Children enjoy mathematical activities and respond enthusiastically to the range of activities and experiences that are available. This was very obvious in a story session observed, where children showed much enjoyment through singing enthusiastically, counting animals and having a good guess as to which number would be next. Children enjoy the simple spider games that are used to encourage them to count to 5. The attractive resources available are particularly helpful in developing a positive attitude towards mathematics. For example, a variety of large and small beads are available for sequencing and threading and for using in a necklace. Natural resources are also available for sorting and for weighing, such as leaves, conkers and acorns, which are inspiring for the children. Children are well behaved, and they work co-operatively during their practical activities. They are able to concentrate for lengthy periods of time in their chosen activities.
73. There is good emphasis on teaching mathematics through practical activities and through children's first hand experiences. The direct teaching of mathematics was not observed during the inspection, although teachers and nursery nurses facilitated children's understanding of mathematics through a number of practical activities, such as cooking and making play dough. Through these activities, children learnt to count ingredients for the mixture and to mix and measure the ingredients. While making sandwiches for their afternoon tea, children were encouraged to learn the names of shapes, such as 'round' and 'square', and the nursery nurse talked about cutting them into halves and quarters. Generally, adults provide good levels of support through directed activities, but less so when activities are initiated by the children. In one lesson, for example, children chose to count small pegs and used their pegboards to arrange them in a sequence. As there was no focused support available from the teacher, for example, in the form of questioning or interactive talk, children who were four-year-olds, soon lost interest and moved on to another activity.

74. Teachers make good use of the available resources to support children's learning. The use of games and puzzles, including computer games, was evident during the inspection. The designated areas for mathematical activities are well organised and stimulate children's interests, providing good opportunities for developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. Attractive displays reinforce mathematical ideas. The resources are readily accessible, clearly labelled and are of a good quality and range.
75. The headteacher, deputy head and staff have a shared understanding of what is to be taught and how. Teachers and nursery nurses plan long and medium-term plans effectively for teaching mathematics, although their daily plans lack precise details for individual children's progress, particularly the more able. There is little difference between what is provided for older children and for the younger children. As a result, there is a lack of systematic progression in children's learning. Teachers' daily evaluations are useful in reflecting on how successful the lessons were and which activities should be organised next. They make their observations regularly and record children's assessments and progress consistently on a regular basis. Individual targets are also set for children, but target setting in mathematics is not yet effective in moving forward the children's learning. The monitoring of teaching is not sufficiently rigorous.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

76. Most children attain standards that are expected for their age in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world and some exceed these. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most should at least reach the expected early learning goals in most aspects within this area of learning and some should exceed them.
77. Children observe closely and enjoy exploring their environment. They enjoy using their magnifying glass to observe living things, such as the mini beasts. They explore the properties of different types of magnets, without being supported by an adult and find out which magnets can attract more metallic objects. The more able children can identify some features of living things and show an ability to select and use appropriate tools and equipment both safely and appropriately.
78. The majority of children make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Progress is better in their understanding of the use of information and communication technology, as compared to the development of scientific ideas and an understanding of a sense of time. Children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress. This is because of the level of focused support they get from additional members of staff.
79. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching is best where, during free choice of activities, the role of the teacher is clear in asking challenging questions, to extend thinking and to develop language skills. However, during the inspection, limited examples of this were seen. Teachers make good use of the available resources to support this area of learning. For example, through play dough, children are given good opportunities to enjoy their experiences of mixing, kneading, rolling and cutting it into different shapes, using their senses. Children show a good level of interest and are stimulated by the range of activities that are provided.
80. In another class, an interesting activity was organised, in which children poured lentils and salt from one container to the other and used a range of utensils, including sieves. Children show interest in the activities and concentrate for a good length of time, for example, when pouring from one container to another. Through this activity, they were developing their 'fine motor skills and co-ordination' well, as intended from the activity. However, the learning potential of the activity was not fully exploited and there were some missed opportunities for children's language development. By the end of the activity, most of the children could not say whether they were using salt or sugar, or what it might taste like. After tasting the salt, most said that it had a sweet taste. Only one girl out of a group of five children could say that it was salt and that it tasted 'salty and horrible'.
81. There are good opportunities for children to design and make things through their woodwork activities. Both girls and boys enjoy these activities and select a variety of tools and materials



provided to assemble and join their models. Adults teach them how to handle their tools, such as the hammer, nails, screws and saw safely.

82. Through their role-play activities, children are developing a good awareness of their own culture and of the cultural diversity represented within the school. For example, they use chopsticks to eat their make-believe noodles and handle a range of Chinese cooking utensils, with much interest. They look closely at the Chinese writing and express their opinions saying how beautiful it is - 'like a picture'. They gain a good understanding of the beliefs and values of different people from around the world through celebrating festivals, such as Diwali, Christmas and the Chinese New Year.
83. There are good opportunities to find out about the immediate locality and to identify its special features. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is extended through visits to local places of interest and by inviting visitors to the school. Children's records show that there are some opportunities to talk about important personal events in their daily lives, but fewer examples to show that children are learning about the passing of time.
84. Children have good opportunities to explore their classroom computer and use it to play simple games, involving for example, counting, matching and sequencing of numbers and objects. They show increasing skill and control in using the mouse. More able children begin to understand instructions and know how to click the mouse to continue the game. Often, older children show the younger ones how to follow the rules of the game. All children are equally interested, showing patience while waiting for their turn and observing which game their friends have chosen. However, at times, they are lost when no adult support is at hand. Where timely support is available, children make good progress in completing computer games and getting satisfaction.

### **Physical development**

85. The overall provision to support children's physical development is good, with most children likely to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals by the time they complete their foundation stage education. This is an improvement since the previous inspection that reported standards in physical development to be satisfactory. Teaching is good and the activities are both appropriate and challenging. The wealth of space, especially outdoors, gives children regular opportunities to explore, experiment and refine their movements within a safe environment. When using the outdoor play area children move confidently, showing increasing control and co-ordination. Within all classes children develop good hand control skills through a wide range of activities, such as when mixing dough, making clay models as well as dextrously threading pasta tubes onto a piece of string to create a necklace. The wide range of construction activities such as constructing a wooden railway track and other construction resources successfully encourage children to manipulate materials and other objects with increasing expertise.
86. Children are adept at using tools such as hammers and saws and hammer nails into pieces of wood, with precision. They really enjoy exploring the texture of cornflour paste or the feel of thick shiny paint on their hands.
87. The secure outside play area provides numerous opportunities for children to move with confidence and increasing control on the wide range of equipment, successfully developing children's physical skills. There are many opportunities for the children to run, climb and balance as well as explore the variety of apparatus and equipment including a train, a playhouse, with an upstairs level, and the new millennium discovery garden. The wide variety of wheeled toys allows children to manipulate their chosen vehicle along the painted playground road track. Children show a good awareness of space and of each other. This extensive outdoor provision includes a large sandpit, which allows children to select their own forms of equipment to explore the sand.

### **Creative development**

88. Children attain satisfactory standards in creative development that are in line with children of the

same age, as found at the time of last inspection. By the time the children complete their foundation stage education they are likely to have reached the early learning goals for creative development. Children with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language make good progress and attain satisfactory standards in this area of learning. The quality of teaching is consistently satisfactory with examples of good teaching to support children's awareness of exploring media and materials. However, teaching does not clearly show how creativity can be nurtured through stimulating and exciting activities that inspire the children.

89. This is an area where children are invited by the wide range of provision to make their own decisions about their own selection of resources and activities. Many opportunities are provided for children to develop their own ideas for choosing the size of their paper for drawing or use the painting resources that have been prepared. They make good models using recyclable materials, such as cardboard boxes glue and scissors to make a boat. Children are provided with good opportunities to use a wide range of materials to create collage pictures and they explore and use tin foil, netting and shiny pipe cleaners with increasing control and imagination. The use of clay to create models of penguins, which the children have delicately painted, provides good opportunities for them to paint with confidence. The open use of painting activities, using both paintbrushes and, at times, their hands encourages children to explore and recognise different colours. Children create necklaces made from four different colour pasta tubes, which they take home with pride. In preparation for Chinese New Year children successfully explore brightly coloured materials of red and silver to create celebratory mobile decorations.
90. There are good opportunities for children to explore musical instruments. The use of small steel band pans in every classroom provides a rich experience in exploring music and sounds. Children enjoy singing and enjoy participating in actions that accompany the songs they sing. Some children naturally sing spontaneously, making up songs about their 'Mummys' using lines from songs that they have previously learnt. They listen to taped music which encourages children to distinguish between different styles of quiet music. Long-term planning shows that children are offered the opportunity to respond to music using dance but there were very few opportunities for them to experiment and explore using creative movement such as dance within the curriculum.
91. The home corner provides appropriate opportunities for children to use creative role-play. The outdoor play area, with the playhouse and the Millennium garden, provides effective provision for a wide range of role-play, such as having a picnic. Other creative role-play opportunities provided include using chopsticks, wool and dried rice so the children can pretend that they are eating Chinese style food.
92. The rolling out of salt dough provides appropriate opportunities for children to try out new experiences and to learn through their senses. Children successfully use colour, textures and shape to support their creative development. They paint pictures of polar bears living among the ice using good observational skills. Children explore print making, using leaves. They use wax crayons to create rubbings of leaves. Teaching does successfully support learning within creative development by stimulating and inspiring the children but this was not consistent within all lessons.