

INSPECTION REPORT

WOODFIELD NURSERY SCHOOL

Nelson

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119088

Headteacher: Mrs S Boardman

Reporting inspector: Michael Hewlett
1569

Dates of inspection: 17th – 18th February 2003

Inspection number: 252157

Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 4 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Sefton Street Brierfield Nelson Lancashire
Postcode:	BB9 5BE
Telephone number:	01282 614636
Fax number:	01282 614636
Appropriate authority:	Lancashire Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Irene Lawrence
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
1569	Michael Hewlett	Registered inspector
11084	Jane Hughes	Lay inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Primary Associates Limited
Suite 13
West Lancashire Technology Management Centre
Moss Lane View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
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	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL	5
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED	11
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	12
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	13

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Woodfield is an average sized nursery school situated in Brierfield, a small town midway between Burnley and Nelson. There are 80 children on roll, aged between three and four years, of whom 39 are girls and 41 are boys. They all attend part-time. The majority of children live in the immediate area where there are few opportunities for them to play outside. There are high levels of deprivation within the local community. The children are taught by two teachers, including the headteacher, and two nursery nurses. They all work full-time. In addition, there are three full-time bilingual assistants and a part-time nursery nurse. These are funded through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) programme. Another nursery nurse is employed to support work in the community base and link with the Surestart project. This post is currently funded through a special grant from the Department for Education and Skills. A small number of children, 5 per cent, have been identified as having special educational needs. Most of these have speech and language difficulties. The school's population reflects the multiracial nature of the community that it serves. The majority of children, almost 90 per cent, are learning English as an additional language, with many at an early stage of language acquisition. The major community language used is Punjabi with a smaller group of Urdu and Bengali speakers. Children's skills when they enter nursery are well below those generally found in children of a similar age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school with some excellent features. Most children are on course to exceed the expected standards by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. The school is very well led and managed, relationships are excellent and the teaching is very good. Children are given an exciting range of activities. They make very good progress during their time in the nursery. It provides a very good basis for children's future learning.

What the school does well

- Helps children to make very good progress and achieve very well in all areas of learning;
- Teaching is very good and staff provide children with an exceptional range of activities;
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and is well supported by her staff. The school is very well managed;
- There is an excellent ethos for learning that enhances all aspects of children's personal development;
- Staff take very good care of the children, know their strengths very well and work very effectively with parents to help their children make the best possible progress in school.

What could be improved

- Arrangements at the start and end of sessions to ensure children have the same amount of time in school.

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 November 1998. It was a successful inspection and only one issue was identified. This has been successfully addressed. The school has continued to make very good progress in the intervening years, whilst maintaining the high quality provision recognised last time. The previous inspection highlighted the lack of privacy available for staff and children when staff provided 'care for their personal needs.' A major refurbishment programme has been completed and the toilet and changing facilities now meet children's needs very well. Priorities for the future are well considered, agreed and clearly understood by all staff and the school is very well placed to build on its current achievements.

STANDARDS

When they enter the nursery, children's skills are well below what would be expected for their age. During their time in nursery, they make very good progress and the majority are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals. These are the standards they are expected to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage, their reception year in primary school. The standards children reach represent very good achievement and are consistent across the six areas of learning. Standards are so high because teaching is so well organised and focused on improving children's skills. It results in most of the children becoming confident and assured, ready to share their views and opinions with others. The majority of the activities are led by the children themselves, but the adults who work with them carefully guide their learning so it remains purposeful. Standards improve because children are taught in small groups and staff accurately identify their individual learning needs. As a result, they receive just the right level of support. A good example of this is seen in the way children who have special educational needs are integrated into all the classroom activities but encouraged to work at their own level. Similarly, children learning English as an additional language receive very good teaching from all staff and are encouraged to be confident and try out new words. This helps their skills in English improve quickly. The school regularly checks on standards achieved by different groups and the inspection confirms their findings that there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls or any other groups.

CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Children are always interested in the varied range of activities and concentrate very well to complete them.
Behaviour	Very good. Children know what staff expect of them and always try hard to meet these very high expectations.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent relationships between staff and children ensure a relaxed and very productive learning environment. Children take every opportunity to become more independent.
Attendance	Good. Most children arrive on time for sessions.

Parents report that their children really like school. Children work very hard and there is a constant buzz of activity about the place. Children respect and trust the adults; they respond well to their constant encouragement. Standards of behaviour are consistently very high and contribute to the very happy atmosphere in school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Comment
Quality of teaching	Very 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.

Teaching is very good overall. This matches the high quality found when the school was last inspected. A particular strength of the teaching is the exceptionally wide range of interesting and relevant activities that teachers plan for the children. These grab their imagination, keep them interested and involved. As a result, they learn more quickly and can apply what they have learned in practical situations.

The teaching of personal, social and emotional development is very strong and is built into all their work. There are excellent relationships between adults and children and they are given ready praise and

encouragement. As a result, children settle quickly and soon grow into confident learners who are willing to try hard and to work independently.

Teaching of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative development and physical development is equally strong and it is this level of consistency that enables children to learn so well because all staff have high expectations. The teaching of speaking, listening and early reading and writing skills is exceptionally good with staff constantly challenging children to try their hardest, not settling for the first attempts. This explains why children's progress in these areas is so rapid. Teaching in the mathematical area is very effective as staff find ways in which children can apply what they have learned in practical situations, such as counting out snacks for their friends or matching shapes they know with those they find around the nursery.

The teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world was picked out by staff as an area where they were less confident. Nevertheless, the teaching was still very good. Indeed, the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) is extremely successful with staff offering children just the right level of support where needed and providing an exciting range of software for them to use.

The organisation of the teaching groups, where each child is allocated to a key worker, is another factor that supports the high quality learning. It means that no child can slip through the net or miss out on the support they need. In addition, excellent systems are in place to make sure children's individual needs are shared with other colleagues who might be working with them during a session. This ensures everyone offers an appropriate level of guidance and knows which activities children should be guided towards.

Children who are new to English are helped to access the full curriculum through skilled bilingual support. Similarly, those children who are identified as having special educational needs are very well taught. They have detailed individual education plans, which set out clearly what staff and parents want them to achieve. These children are included in all aspects of nursery life and this commitment to the inclusion of all is another outstanding feature of the teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides an exceptional range of activities for the children and this helps to develop their early learning. However, because of the way the start and end of sessions are organised, some children get longer in school than others.
Provision for children with special educational needs	This is a strong feature of the school's work. Provision is very good because children's individual needs are carefully assessed and effectively planned for.
Provision for children with English as an additional language	Very good systems are in place to identify and provide for children's particular needs. Bilingual support is very effective.
Provision for children's personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good in all areas. Staff offer a large range of interesting activities that add greatly to children's personal development and help them prepare to be effective and sensitive members of society.
How well the school cares for its children	Very good. All adults show great sensitivity to children's welfare and offer them all the necessary security. Staff know children's strengths very well and offer them daily challenges in their learning.

The school establishes very good relationships with parents and collects detailed information about what each child can do. Staff create a harmonious, multiracial community where children feel confident and secure, and where different beliefs are valued.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher's leadership is outstanding. She leads by example and has established a clear educational direction for the school. She is very well supported by all the staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors have no delegated powers, as the local authority is responsible for the school. Nevertheless, governors are actively involved in the life and work of the school. They fulfil their role as 'critical friends' very effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school regularly checks on how successful it has been and is always trying to improve its practice.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school is successful in making sure it gets good value when spending its money. This has resulted in an excellent range of high quality resources.

Staffing levels and accommodation are very good. Resources for learning are excellent and they are very well organised so that children can choose for themselves and become more independent.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is well led and managed; Children make good progress and the school is well regarded locally; Staff are easy to approach and are very friendly; Children enjoy school and behave very well; Children with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are very well supported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A small number of parents felt that children did not get enough work at home or have access to a wide enough range of activities outside of school.

Inspection findings confirm the parents' overwhelmingly positive views. The children make very good progress. Parents are very supportive and value what the school has to offer. The school has taken steps to extend the range of facilities available such as the lunchtime club. Bearing in mind the age of the children, a sufficient amount of work is available for them to do at home.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Helps children to make very good progress and achieve very well in all areas of learning

1. Children of all abilities and from all backgrounds make very good progress during their time at Woodfield nursery. It means that after starting with well below average skills, the majority are well on course to exceed the standards expected within the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Indeed, some of the older children and some higher attainers are already reaching these levels in some of the areas such as numeracy and their ability to express themselves. Parents are delighted with their children's achievements.
2. There are many reasons why the children do so well. They include their very positive attitudes to learning and enthusiasm for what they do. The high quality of the teaching that encourages children to try things out and the exceptional leadership of the headteacher, which sets such high standards. All these features combine to create an exciting and stimulating environment.
3. As they develop children's personal, social and emotional development skills, staff expect that children will take responsibility for their own learning and find their own resources. They are expected to be independent and make choices. Even the very youngest are expected to clear away the equipment they have used and realise that if they do not it will have an impact on others who want to use it later. Good examples of this were seen in the way that children managed snack time. They organised the food, helped themselves to drinks from the water cooler and took great care to leave their table clean and tidy. On another occasion, one child, who demonstrated challenging behaviour, was reluctant to join in a story session with the rest of her group. The teacher working with her quietly explained what was expected and how, if she kept interrupting others, they wouldn't be able to listen to what she was saying. At first the girl ignored the requests, but the teacher's persistence and encouragement, supported by the rest of the children in the group, eventually persuaded her to do as she was asked. She listened attentively for most of the time, helped to clear away some books and what she achieved was celebrated with the rest of the group. On a later occasion, the same girl was observed helping to organise her friends in the home corner as they played. She used the same mannerisms and terminology that she had seen and heard from the teacher and adopted that role in her own play.
4. The majority of children make very good progress in improving their language and communication skills. Understandably, this is given a high priority because so many children arrive in school with a limited grasp of English. Staff take every opportunity to improve children's listening and speaking skills. For example, role play is used as an excellent vehicle for children to improve their spoken English. One group set up 'Brierfield Chippy' and organised it so that it was just like chip shops they had visited. It grabbed their interest and many in the group were able to take on different roles such as customers or shop assistants, some using the same intonation as the adult who was supporting them. Others found this more difficult but they were given extra support from a bilingual assistant who translated where necessary so that they could take part in the discussion. This enabled them to play a full and active part in the session, deciding how many orders of fish and chips they wanted to place and trying to work out how much it was likely to cost. Higher attainers worked happily alongside those who were less confident with their English, as they decided what they needed

and how many portions were still available. 'You had better hurry up', said one girl who decided she was in charge of the shop, 'we haven't got many fish fingers left and I'm not cooking any more.'

5. Most children have a secure understanding of number and shape and are especially good at applying what they know in practical situations. When they find mathematical shapes around the nursery, they are able to name them and explain some of the similarities and differences. 'That table is a circle and it's better than that square table because we can all sit round it', said one confident and fluent girl who then organised her friends around the table to prove her point.
6. Children have begun to understand many of the features of the world around them. For example, they talk about the seas and oceans where fish live and what these creatures need to survive. Many are beginning to show an understanding of their culture and that of some of their classmates. They talk happily about family events such as a new baby and how they help to look after it. 'My mummy is looking after the baby. He sleeps all the time and cries a bit when he's hungry', said one boy as he arrived in school. He was able to explain how the baby was already growing bigger because 'I'm looking after him as well.'
7. Children make very good progress in improving their creative skills. They make sensible choices as they decide what materials they should use, as they create their own collage pictures. Most are very accomplished as they roll clay into recognisable shapes, deciding between themselves which tools they need to use to create the best shape. Children know a good range of songs and are keen to join in. They are enthusiastic in their singing; often combining some songs they know with number rhymes, which helps them to apply their mathematical knowledge, such as, 'Five little fish went swimming one day.'
8. All aspects of physical development are well represented within the curriculum and children make very good progress in this area. The quality of their work in the outdoor area is particularly good. They make excellent use of it, moving around with very good co-ordination skills, recognising the need to share the space with others. The exciting range of activities provides a stimulating environment in which to learn. For example, with the help of adults, children reorganised the fixed climbing frame by adding wooden walkways, allowing them to take part in some challenging balancing games. Because they are used to working in this way, children are very proficient at using tools and equipment. They take it for granted that if they need to make something then they choose suitable tools and equipment and start to organise it for themselves. A good example of this was seen in the way they collected together all the materials to create a picture. They selected what they needed to use without direct reference to adults, took responsibility for their own learning and showed very good levels of independence.

Teaching is very good and staff provide an exceptional range of activities for the children

9. The quality of teaching was judged to be very good during the last inspection. These high standards have been maintained and built on. There is now a higher proportion of excellent teaching. All staff provide children with a rich diet of activities, which makes sure they experience the full Foundation Stage curriculum.

10. The school successfully provides children with a range of skills that will support their growing independence. For example, different groups of children designed their own collage linked to the 'Underwater theme' that had been the focus of the week's work. Not only did they select the materials they wanted to use but cut them to just the right size to recreate the rainbow fish they had seen. The adult working with them supported their learning very well, only intervening when absolutely necessary or to discuss ways in which they might improve their 'finished product.' Because staff work so closely together, there is a consistency about their approach to teaching that helps children feel secure.
11. Another feature of the high quality teaching is the way in which all staff are prepared to try out new ideas. They are always striving to improve their practice and refuse to settle for the easy option. A very good example of this was seen during the inspection when children set about organising their shop. Children had shown a great interest in the kind of goods their 'customers' would prefer and how much they would need to charge. Adults encouraged children to look at books and share their knowledge to find out the information and they talked excitedly about what they needed to do. Negotiation skills were to the fore as the children debated who should be in charge and how it would be organised. Much of the conversation then moved to costs and how it could be recorded on the signs they were making. The practitioner working with children skillfully introduced number patterns, linked to rhymes they already knew. As a result, some of the higher attainers within the group managed to make a 'price list' with recognisable figures which they explained to their classmates. When the teaching is so practically based and so immediate, with adults responding to situations and being adaptable, children learn quickly.
12. In all their work, staff demonstrate very high levels of subject knowledge, excellent questioning techniques and a clear understanding of how young children learn. They use open ended questions such as 'What do you think will happen next?' and 'How would you feel if this happened to you?' Very good examples of these approaches were seen during bilingual story sessions. On one occasion, children listened to the rhyme 'one, two, three, four five, once I caught a fish alive' and then retold it explaining how they might feel in a similar situation. The adult working with them asked challenging questions that made them think. 'Do you think the finger hurt when the fish grabbed it? Let's have a look at the fish we bought at the market; has it got sharp teeth?' Once again she extended their understanding, making good links with other experiences they had had. She wouldn't settle for their first answer and asked them to explain what they meant, often supporting them with mother tongue.
13. Staff make very good use of the excellent resources and very good accommodation to improve their teaching. The outside areas, including the garden and the climbing apparatus, are consistently harnessed by staff to provide wider curriculum experiences for the children. For example, staff encourage children to observe closely and then talk about what they have seen; discussing changes they have spotted since they last explored this part of the school. Such imaginative use of the school's facilities keeps children interested and actively involved. They really enjoy their work, finding these activities stimulating and exciting. On other occasions, different groups followed a 'colour and shape' trail, recording what they found and noticing how colours were different in the plants and bushes as the seasons changed. Another successful teaching session outside involved children improving their climbing skills using the climbing frame. The activity allowed the children to create challenging 'climbs' that could be adapted to meet their individual needs by adding linked walkways inside the structure. One child found the height of the bars daunting and was reluctant to move beyond the first rung. The adult working with this

group focused her attention on this girl, encouraging, supporting and eventually climbing the frame herself to prove it could be done. As a result of this intervention and guidance, the girl finally managed to get past the first rung and then surprised herself by climbing even higher. The whole group stopped to celebrate this success and the adult then turned her attention to a more confident child who, she felt, was not extending himself sufficiently. The indoor learning environment is of a similarly high standard. It is rich, attractive and very well cared for. It offers children a wide range of interesting and exciting activities that they can select from. As a result, they stay engrossed in activities and become more independent.

14. All groups of children are equally well taught. This is because the staff identify their needs early on and then track their individual progress effectively. As a result, little escapes the staff as far as children's curriculum needs are concerned. Some very good examples of this were seen in the way in which higher attainers were given more challenging activities when they have completed a task. These decisions are carefully planned by staff so that the pace of children's learning suits their needs. For example, one boy who is particularly able is given additional support which allows him to practise reading. He enjoys these sessions and makes rapid progress because he can access books that would be too hard for the rest of his group. He read most of the words in a book he found about 'Underwater worlds'. He clearly understood the content as he talked confidently about the fish he could identify. 'Yes you can eat sardines'. Similarly, children who have special educational needs are very well taught. They each have a detailed plan which sets out targets for them to work towards. All staff contribute to these plans when organising activities and regular meetings are held to ensure that the right amount of progress is being made and children are making the most of opportunities on offer.
15. In all their work, staff set tasks that build children's confidence and encourage them to take on new challenges. This is especially important, as so many children are new to English. The tasks on offer take full account of children's knowledge, understanding and abilities but equally important is the way staff work hard to raise children's confidence and self-esteem. For example, during a story session, one boy who had little English was very well supported by a bilingual assistant. She made sure he was able to take a full and active part in the story session with other children who had better language skills. The adult working with him showed great patience and supported his attempts to try some of the words he knew. The adult offered ideas and suggestions but did not offer solutions. The boy persevered and took a full part as he and his friends worked out how the story might end. Because the adult guided and supported the learning so well, language skills improved and the child took a great pride in what he had achieved.

**The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and is well supported by key staff.
The school is very well managed**

16. The headteacher has shown outstanding leadership. The school has faced major challenges during recent years, brought about by staff changes and absences due to illness. It is a mark of the headteacher's very good management that throughout this period, high quality nursery provision has been sustained.
17. There is a positive ethos within the school that every child can succeed. The leadership of the headteacher makes sure that this aim is delivered in practice and that children's individual needs are catered for. She has a clear vision of how the school should move forward and puts the well being of children and their achievements first. She is very well supported by her teacher colleague. Both are

very good teachers and, together, they lead their colleagues by example. All staff show a high level of commitment to raising standards and improving children's skills. A good example of this was seen during the regular team meetings held each day. The headteacher makes sure all staff contribute and agreements are made about the areas that children need to experience and observations that should be made about how well they do. It is apparent just how much knowledge they have when they talk about plans for the day and what individual children need. Such detailed knowledge and regular monitoring of each child contributes to the very good progress they make.

18. Another successful feature of the school is the way that staff are constantly reviewing their practice. They look for ways in which they can improve and are prepared to take advice from a variety of sources. The introduction of performance management has built on the very effective strategies that were already in place. For example, the headteacher observes teaching and provides each member of staff with constructive feedback. In addition, external consultants and advisers are used effectively to support and evaluate the work of the school. This helps to ensure that staff keep abreast of current developments in early years education and that monitoring arrangements of their practice are rigorous. A good example of this was the way in which support was sought on how the needs of a higher attaining child could be met. The strategies suggested were used by all staff working with him during the period of the inspection and are having a positive impact on his progress.
19. There is an excellent school development plan which sets out clearly what the school hopes to achieve for its children and, it is focused on the right priorities. It has a direct impact on the school's success. For example, it had identified that some areas of ICT needed to be improved and staff confidence increased. Because of the measures taken, such as using better software, organising the machines efficiently and staff training, children's work in this area has improved. All staff and governors contribute to the plan knowing that their views and opinions will be valued and listened to. Governors, play an active part in the life of the school. Individual members visit regularly, are valuable supporters working on behalf of the school. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
20. Analysing its own performance and checking on the progress made by individuals and groups of children are other areas that the school successfully addresses. The quality and range of the data collected is exceptional, building detailed profiles of each child, teaching group and the whole year group. By doing this throughout the year, it identifies early on those children who might need extra support and who, potentially, could underachieve. Staff then use their regular meetings to organise, at an individual level, activities which will help these children to improve their skills. For example, story groups are arranged to meet the needs of children's improving language skills. Because they know their needs so well, there is regular movement between the groups, making sure that children are not held back or given work that is too easy for them.

There is an excellent ethos for learning that enhances all aspects of children's personal development

21. Woodfield Nursery School is a very exciting place for children. Although they enjoy the weekly ritual of returning their excellent home learning activity packs to the library, many are only too anxious to get on with the really fun activities in classrooms. A hurried wave to their parents and they are off at a gallop to see what fascinating

topics await them. Staff are skilled at providing an abundance of interesting activities that capture children's imaginations and help them learn effectively.

22. A particularly successful task encouraged children to investigate the properties of fresh fish. An interesting selection of squid, prawns, sprats and rainbow trout was provided and children spent some time touching, smelling and generally 'getting to know' the different fish. The headteacher illustrated just how well she knew the children as she responded to their differing reactions with great sensitivity. Her choice of language was pitched at just the right level so that one boy who spoke a language other than English as his mother tongue was able to learn about each fish just as easily as another boy who spoke fluent English. One learned about the scales on the fish and realised that the fish had no hairs. The other explained that 'this fish is dead' and that 'it is white on one side.' Both boys were totally absorbed as the headteacher slit one of the fish open so that they could see some of its internal organs. They squealed with shock as they tentatively explored inside the trout's mouth and found it had sharp teeth.
23. Colourful examples of children's creative work hang all around the nursery. Banners sparkle from the ceilings and paintings are adorned with children's first written attempts to describe what they have drawn. Many delights of the natural world are on display, along with live fish in the entrance hall and photographic evidence of hatching chicks. Music is an everyday part of the school's routine as, for example, quiet tunes signal 'tidy up time' at the end of an activity.
24. Staff provide a constant stream of conversation for children to tap into and this builds their confidence. The children know that teachers value what they say. Many are happy to strike up a conversation with visitors on a variety of topics such as how they have noticed a friend's brand new bright pink shoes or how they 'really like the chips' served at snack time. Most children show well developed levels of self-confidence and this helps them to question new experiences. Children are used to the respect offered by staff and they approach other adults and their peers in the same way. They make the most of the varied opportunities staff give them to become increasingly self sufficient. Many help themselves to a cup of water from the water cooler and know that this is good for them.

Staff take very good care of the children, know their strengths very well and work very effectively with parents to help their children make the best possible progress in school.

25. Children's well being is at the heart of everything staff do. All aspects of children's welfare are approached with appropriate sensitivity and suitable systems are in place to ensure the school environment is safe. Since the last inspection, a brand new bathroom has been installed and is equipped with a separate shower and changing area. This ensures privacy for children using the facilities and helps them to feel at ease.
26. Daily staff meetings provide ample opportunity for all staff to discuss any concerns they have about particular children as well as offering contributions about how children respond to the learning activities. Such close co-operation between all the staff ensures that each child is offered properly focused guidance and support throughout their time in school.

27. As staff know children's strengths and areas for development so well they are able to match tasks to their individual needs and children respond very well to this. For example, one little girl approached the table with the fresh fish and listened intently to what other children and the teacher were saying. The teacher knew that she was very timid and, after asking if she would like to touch the fish, she left her to watch and listen but did not force her to participate. The girl gained in confidence as she saw others investigating the fish and the teacher was pleased that she had stayed close by for so long.
28. Parents report that their children really like coming to school and this is due in no small part to the excellent relationships staff establish with the children. Parents see this each day as they drop off or collect their children and they are impressed with just how well staff know their children.
29. Staff use the knowledge they collect about each child to help steer parents in the right direction when supporting their child's learning at home. Staff who run the activity library encourage parents and children to look at particular activity packs if they know that the children are particularly interested in certain activities such as cutting or jigsaws. Parents really appreciate this level of support and many come into the library, as a result. Staff engage parents in conversations and parents are at ease talking with them. Good levels of bilingual support are available for parents who speak a variety of languages as their mother tongue.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Arrangements at the start and end of sessions so that children have an equal amount of time in school.

30. This is a school committed to working in partnership with parents at every opportunity to ensure the active involvement of each parent in their child's progress. Staff work hard to establish good relationships with parents who greatly value the school and the very positive impact it has on their children's development. The beginning and end of sessions are used well by staff to speak informally to parents, picking up on any concerns they might have or sharing information on how well a child has done during a session. Bilingual staff are sensibly involved during this period to make sure that no one is excluded from such discussions.
31. However, the time allocated for these 'hand over' sessions is too long to ensure equal access to the required teaching sessions for all children. For example, arrival times for the morning session cover a thirty-minute period and departure times range over a fifteen-minute period. As a result, children's time in school can vary by as much as forty-five minutes each session. During the period of the inspection this meant that some children had less time engaged in outdoor activities than others because their parents collected them as soon as the doors were opened at the end of the session.
32. The school has recognised this as an area that needs to be addressed. For example, it is looking at ways to reduce the variations in time currently being experienced by some children, without losing the benefits of regular discussions with parents that the present system brings.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

33. The school should now:

- (a) Reorganise the arrangements at the start and end of sessions so that:
- children have an equal amount of time in school;
 - learning opportunities are not missed during the end of session activities when some children leave early.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of sessions observed	17
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	7	5	2	0	0	0
Percentage	18	41	29	12	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 around five 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)	40
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	68

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and support staff

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	184

Number of pupils per FTE adult	5
--------------------------------	---

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	3599
Total expenditure	3599
Expenditure per pupil	90
Balance brought forward from previous year	281
Balance carried forward to next year	371

The school does not have a delegated budget. These figures represent expenditure on supplies and equipment which the school controls.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	80
Number of questionnaires returned	57

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	18	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	42	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	26	0	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	56	32	5	2	5
The teaching is good.	79	19	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	32	2	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	18	0	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	32	4	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	68	30	2	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	74	25	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	32	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	61	26	5	2	5

Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer and may not total 100.