

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **KING'S LYNN NURSERY SCHOOL**

King's Lynn

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120766

Headteacher: Mrs P Bradshaw

Lead inspector: Mrs G Beasley

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2003

Inspection number: 256619

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 children: 3-5  
Gender of children: Mixed  
Number on roll: 71 part time children

School address: St James Park  
London Road  
King's Lynn  
NORFOLK  
Postcode: PE30 5PT

Telephone number: 01553 760221  
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body  
Name of chair of governors: Ms Lindsay Campbell

Date of previous inspection: 16<sup>th</sup> November 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

King's Lynn Nursery School is a small school situated in a park in the centre of the town. There are currently 71 children who attend part time. While some children have been at nursery for a term and a half, many have been in nursery for only a few weeks. The children come from all over King's Lynn and move on to many different primary schools in the town, mostly in the September after they are four. The children's social and economic backgrounds are broadly average. Most children are of white British heritage. Ten are from other ethnic backgrounds. Of these, two children speak Spanish, one Chinese and two Punjabi as their mother tongue. There are usually some children from travelling backgrounds, although during the inspection they were away at fairs. Attainment on entry covers a wide range and overall, it is average. Ten percent of the available 80 places are reserved for children with special educational needs. No children have a statement of their special needs at present. There are good links with a local playgroup, a special school and the closest primary schools. The school is involved in Family Support Services and a Family Learning Programme.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27899	Mrs G Beasley	Lead inspector	
1305	Dr B Rance	Lay inspector	
30890	Mrs B Hunnable	Team inspector	Personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, physical development.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

King's Lynn Nursery is a **good school**, which is giving the children a good start to their learning. Standards are above average and all children achieve well because the quality of teaching and learning is good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has successfully created a welcoming and purposeful ethos in which everyone is encouraged to learn. The nursery gives **good value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides very good leadership. She is supported well by a committed and capable team of staff and governors.
- All children achieve well because teaching and learning are good.
- There is a very welcoming and positive atmosphere where everyone is valued and respected and children are cared for very well.
- Provision for personal development is very good and, as a result, the children love learning and behave very well.
- Mathematical and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are satisfactory overall, but are not always planned in the same structured way as other areas of learning.
- All adults know the children very well and therefore are able to make sure they take part in the full range of activities.
- Links with the community and with parents are very good and this helps make the curriculum more interesting and exciting for the children.

There has been **good improvement** since the previous inspection. The quality of leadership and management has improved and this has meant that the weaknesses identified in the previous report have been dealt with quickly and thoroughly. Achievement is now good. Achievement in communication skills is much better than previously. There are good opportunities for the children to talk about what they are doing and to 'write' in many different situations. Provision for personal development is now very good and this is leading to very good levels of independence and self-confidence, and high self-esteem.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

**All children make good progress and achieve well.** Most are likely to exceed the national goals they are expected to achieve in all areas of learning except in their mathematical development. Their progress is particularly good in their personal, social and emotional development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. This is due to the particular emphasis on these areas of learning and the provision of a very wide range of interesting activities. Progress in mathematical development and ICT skills is satisfactory and most children are likely to reach the goals expected for their age by the time they leave the nursery in these aspects. Children with special educational needs and those learning to speak English achieve as well as other children because they benefit from the same individual support and very good interaction between the adults and all children.

**Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** Due to the caring and gentle approach by all staff, relationships are very good. The children have already settled well to the secure routines and clear expectations, and get along well when working and playing together. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education provided by the nursery is good overall. The quality of teaching and learning is good.** Adults respond very well to individual children's needs and this makes sure that they make good progress in most activities. Adults provide very good one to one support to all children, and this means those with special educational needs and those learning to speak English

make the same good progress as other children. Planning and assessment procedures are good. Parents particularly welcome the detailed account they receive on their child's first day at school and look forward to the report they receive when their child is chosen to be special child of the day. Assessment information is used well informally to provide activities that are well matched to the children's needs so that they make good progress. It is not always used so well to guide planning in mathematical development and ICT activities. The nursery has identified the need to develop more focussed opportunities for the children to use ICT to support learning in all areas of learning. The children use computers often during self chosen activities, but these are not planned to build on previous skills and therefore learning, although satisfactory overall, is not of the same high standard as other aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. Due to the very good emphasis given to developing social skills, the children are all learning to choose their own activities and look after their own personal needs very independently.

The curriculum is very good overall. There is a very good range of visits and visitors which bring learning alive and make the time in nursery more interesting for the children. The outdoor area is particularly well organised and planned to provide exciting and fun things for the children to do. Links with the community are very good. The school provides very good levels of care and welfare. There are very good links with parents.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management of the school are good overall.** Leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. Under the very good leadership of the headteacher, the staff team has worked hard to ensure the curriculum meets the needs of all the children. All staff work very well together to make sure the children get the best they can offer.

The management of the school is good. School improvement builds successfully on the school's needs. Monitoring and evaluation are mostly done informally by the headteacher. However, these evaluations help the staff to decide on the courses and training they need to attend, and this is helping to improve teaching skills and knowledge further.

Governors give good support to the nursery. They know what the nursery does well and are committed to make further improvements. The new canopies have meant the children can now go outside to work and play at all times of the year.

## **PARENTS' AND CHILDREN'S VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents have a very high regard for the nursery. They are very positive about all aspects of the nursery's work and many couldn't praise it highly enough. They welcome the many opportunities for them to get involved through the Parent, Carer and Toddler group, and Family Learning group. The inspection team agrees that there is a very good partnership with parents. The children are very happy in the nursery and confidently talk with adults about their work and play.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the nursery should do to build on the good provision are:

- Plan more regular and structured opportunities for the children to use a range of ICT equipment in all areas of learning.
- Extend teachers' planning of mathematical development so that it builds more often on the children's previous knowledge, understanding and skills.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY CHILDREN**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

The children start the nursery with average levels of attainment overall. They all make **good progress** and many exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of their time in nursery. Achievement is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and have very good levels of independence and self-confidence.
- The children's achievement in knowledge and understanding of the world is very good.
- The children talk about their work with confidence.
- Early reading and writing skills are well developed.
- The children have a good understanding of their own and others' safety when playing outside.
- Children's creative development is above average.
- Children with special educational needs and those who speak a different language to English at home, make the same good progress as other children in the nursery.
- Achievement in mathematical development and ICT skills is satisfactory, but is not to the same high standard as other areas of learning.

#### **Commentary**

1. All adults place great emphasis on developing the children's self-confidence and helping them to get to know the necessary routines from the moment they start nursery. Very strong relationships are formed quickly as a result of adults treating the children in a considerate and positive way. Gentle reminders about caring for each other and sharing the toys and resources encourage all children to share and take turns fairly. Social manners are developed very well during snack time when the children talk in small groups about what they have done so far during the morning or afternoon play and work times. As a result of this, the children rapidly develop very good levels of personal development.
2. The activities for developing the children's knowledge and understanding of the world are carefully thought out to make sure that the children enjoy their learning. This includes visits to local places of interest and exciting adventures such as train rides. The activities are mostly practical and based in play so the children develop an inquisitive approach to their learning and consequently remember a great deal about what they have seen, heard and done. Many children choose to repeat some of the activities and are keen to let visitors know that small creatures can be found under logs in the Sensory Garden, handing out magnifying lenses to enable them to look closely for themselves. Most learning takes place through first hand experiences and this gives purpose to the learning and gets all children involved. The very good one to one interaction between the children and adults means that all children, including those with special educational needs and those who speak a different language to English at home make very good progress in this area of learning and achieve well above average levels.
3. Since the previous inspection, the nursery has put into place many structured opportunities for the children to talk about their work and the things they have done both in nursery and at home. These opportunities are further developed through carefully planned role-play areas and games. Adults use questions skilfully to make sure all children respond in speaking sessions and talk to the children constantly when they are engaged in their play both inside and out. This means that their levels of vocabulary have progressed quickly since starting nursery. The children talk with confidence about everyday things and their social conversation is above average.



4. Due to the carefully planned activities for the children to share books with each other at nursery, and to borrow books to share with their parents and carers at home, their early reading skills are above average. The children draw and 'write' with confidence and by the end of their time at nursery, many children are using recognisable letters to 'tell their stories' and 'write their shopping lists' for example. This is good improvement since the previous inspection when this aspect was a weakness. As a result of the good provision, most children exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of their time in nursery.
5. Good progress is made in the children's levels of physical and creative development. The well-planned sessions ensure that the children experience a rich and varied range of activities through which they can learn. The wide range of activities ensures that the children get good opportunities to create music and to develop their imaginative play. The opportunities for the children to develop their creative skills in painting and collage activities are structured well to allow them to explore and select from a range of materials to decorate and design their pictures and models. Due to the good provision, most children are likely to exceed the goals they are expected to reach in their physical and creative development by the time they leave the nursery.
6. The children have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of numbers, shapes and measures and most are likely to reach the goals they are expected to reach by the time they leave the nursery. Whilst very good interaction between adults and children ensures that the children are all fully involved in counting and shape activities, the children all tend to cover work at the same level despite some needing to work with smaller groups of objects and others being capable of working with numbers greater than ten. Children use computers competently to explore stories and shapes on screen. The nursery has recently bought toys which the children can programme to move them around the floor. As yet, their planned use is not integrated into the curriculum and children either choose to use computers or they do not. There is no structure to planning as yet for children to build systematically on the skills they already have.

### **Children' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Children have very positive attitudes to school and are very keen to learn. They all behave very well. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is very good. Most children are likely to exceed the goals they are expected to reach in their personal, social and emotional development. Children's attendance and punctuality are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Relationships between the children and between adults and children are very good.
  - Children are given very good opportunities to take responsibility and to become independent so that they develop high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem.
  - Children have a good understanding of right and wrong.
  - Children's knowledge of a variety of cultures is very good.
  - Children enjoy coming to school and their parents bring them in good time.
7. Children come into nursery happily and are very keen to join in the wide range of activities provided for them. The children follow the routines for self-registration by choosing their name card when they arrive, and this helps them to develop some independence and responsibility as soon as they start nursery. They move happily to one of the activities already put out, often becoming involved in one favourite activity. During each session, the children are actively involved in the wide range of exciting activities, some of which are led by adults and some organised by the children themselves. Because the children know the school routines, they move from one area to another confidently, and are keen to help prepare the room for juice and snack time. They are developing very good levels of independence by putting their own coats on and hanging them back on the peg after outside play. From the moment they start nursery,

children are taught to share, take turns and to respect each other and resources. They take care of resources and help to tidy away at the end of each session. Most children are happy to try new activities and staff gently encourage those who are less confident. These very positive attitudes enable the children to achieve very well.

8. The school has a well-established behaviour policy which reflects the staff's high expectations and this ensures that the children always behave very well. Any minor arguments are quickly and calmly dealt with. Relationships between the children are very good as they learn to share and take turns. All adults act as very good role models in developing friendships and showing respect for one another's efforts. Because of these positive relationships, children feel secure and are already self-confident, knowing they can talk to any adult who in turn will listen and offer help if it is needed.
9. There is a warm, family atmosphere in the nursery where everyone treats each other with respect and kindness. This rubs off on the children immediately they start and they are quick to tell you that it is not kind to knock another child's tower over on purpose, for example. This reflects their good understanding of right and wrong and the need to treat people and things with care.
10. The provision for spiritual development is good with time for reflection and attention drawn to the wonder of the world around us. In the summer, the children planted sunflower seeds and enjoyed watching them grow, and those children returning for a second term took pride in showing visitors those that are still to be seen growing in the garden. The children enjoy exploring the sensory garden, and with magnifying lenses and clipboards in hand, act as science detectives to search out the small creatures they know they will find under at least one of the many logs. Children learn about feelings and consideration by discussing well-chosen stories or at other times when they sit in a circle and talk about their own and other's feelings. The nursery celebrates a range of festivals and traditions such as Holi, Divali, Christmas and Easter. They see local traditions such as the Mart and watch Morris dancers. This very good provision for cultural development enables the children to learn to appreciate their own cultural heritage and to understand that other cultures exist. The school welcomes visitors from the range of cultures represented in the school to help with cooking activities in preparation for planned celebrations or to accompany the children on visits to places in the community. There is a good range of resources for promoting the multicultural nature of society.
11. Since attendance at nursery school is not a legal requirement, no national statistics are available for comparison purposes. However, the school does maintain registers like any other school and these show that once a child joins the nursery their attendance is good. Parents co-operate very well with the school and always explain when a child is absent.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the nursery is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall. The curriculum is **very good** and the nursery cares for the children **very well**. Partnerships with parents and the community are **very good**.

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching is good and all children, including children with special educational needs and those learning to speak English, learn well. Assessment of children's progress and achievement is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Adults plan exciting and fun activities to fully involve and motivate the children to take part.
- All adults know the children very well and therefore respond very well to their individual needs.

- Very good provision for personal, social and emotional development means that the children quickly become independent and are keen to take on responsibility.
- Assessment procedures are good and the information is used well to plan a good range of activities for the children.
- Children are given the good opportunities to talk about how well they are doing.
- The assessment of children with special educational needs is very good.
- Teachers' planning does not always build on the children's previous knowledge, skills and understanding in their ICT and mathematical development.
- Very good interaction by adults and the many incidental conversations about what the children are doing, explore children's understanding, extend their vocabulary and move learning forward very well.

## Commentary

12. The nursery staff meet every week to evaluate how successfully the activities have supported the children's learning and use the outcomes of this discussion to plan further exciting activities which they know will interest particular groups and individual children. Careful assessment of their needs is done informally at these meetings and this makes sure that all adults are aware of the support and extension the children need in order to learn successfully. Therefore, when the children are engaged in the activities they have chosen, adults interact very well with them to make sure they are learning as well as they can from what they are doing. Children with special educational needs and those who do not speak English at home are given the good support they need to be fully involved in all activities.
13. As a result of the fun and often exciting activities on offer, the children are always fully engrossed in their play. The nursery staff have built up an ethos where the children feel safe and confident to ask for anything. As a result, the children have high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem. They are happy to choose their own activities and to talk about their own learning. Adults respond very well to their needs by talking to them at opportune moments about what they are doing. Activities often require the children to use their senses to look, listen, touch, smell and taste and this raises their awareness to what is happening around them. During one cooking group activity, the children were asked why they needed to check that there was no eggshell in the cake mixture. '*So we don't have crunchy cakes*' came the spontaneous reply indicating the good awareness that particular child has for what happens when egg shell remains in the mixture. These interactions enable the adults to make secure assessments about what the children can and cannot do and tells the staff what they need to do in future to take learning forward. This aspect of teaching is very good. However, adults do not use assessment information often enough to plan different activities for children of different capabilities in mathematical development and extending their computer skills, so these aspects do not always build on the children's previous knowledge, understanding and skills. Achievement is satisfactory in these aspects overall, but they are not as high as the good and sometimes very good learning and achievement in other areas of learning.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 12 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3	3	6	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

14. The table above reflects the good quality of teaching overall. Those lessons which were judged very good, were activities such as cooking, 'Circle Time', when the children sit together and talk about their feelings, likes and dislikes, and the activities planned and organised outside. All of these enabled the children to make very good gains in their knowledge and understanding of their world and in their personal, social and emotional development.

15. Particular emphasis is placed on the children developing their personal, social and emotional development and because of this the children have a very good understanding of how they should treat each other. Creative activities are so exciting that they are particular favourites and during the inspection the children enjoyed making their masks for Divali celebrations.
16. All adults are fully involved in assessments of children's learning. They assess the children's level of attainment when they start nursery and regularly monitor their progress toward agreed targets. Assessment is used informally when staff meet regularly to discuss the curriculum and children's progress. Their very good knowledge of the children and the curriculum enables them to plan the next stage of learning. More formal assessment is carried out in key skills such as counting and making marks on paper each term and the school has recently introduced a new assessment on entry to help monitor children's progress more effectively. Children are able to contribute to assessment by completing an 'I can' caterpillar showing all their achievements at nursery. Parents value the report they receive after their child's first day at nursery. The attractive end of year report includes a photograph and summarises some of the many experiences the children have had and their learning in that time. There is very good provision for the identification of children with special educational needs. Individual Education Plans identify clear targets to promote progression. All staff are aware of these targets and encourage and observe the children during their daily activities.

## The curriculum

Children experience a **very good** range of stimulating and relevant learning opportunities which cover all six areas of learning. There are many **very good** opportunities for enrichment with visitors to the school and visits to local places of interest.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is varied and stimulating.
  - The outdoor curriculum is very good providing a wide range of experiences and links across the curriculum.
  - There is a good balance between child-initiated and adult led activities.
  - The good number of well-qualified staff ensures that all children have equal access to the curriculum.
  - The planning for mathematical development and ICT does not systematically build on previous learning.
  - Provision for children with special educational needs and those learning to speak English is very good.
  - The range of resources is good and easily accessible for staff and children.
17. The curriculum is planned very well through a series of themes which changes every two weeks. This adds variety to the children's learning. Through weekly planning meetings, all adults share in the evaluation of the previous week's activities and plan the next week's curriculum to ensure that it meets the interests, aptitudes and individual needs of all the children. The school has identified areas from the Foundation Stage curriculum which are relevant to the needs of the children and concentrate on these areas. Planning for mathematical development and ICT skills does not always build on children's previous learning. However, due to their very good knowledge of the children, adults respond well to the children's ideas to develop skills spontaneously. This ensures achievement is satisfactory in these areas. Strong emphasis is placed on planning for exploration and learning through play and this and the planned adult led activities promote good progress towards the overall above average achievements in nearly all six areas of learning.
  18. The school makes very good use of the outdoor area which is well equipped for challenging climbing and balancing activities and for riding wheeled toys around the spacious playground. Planned use of the attractive sensory garden provides a tranquil place where children can sit

quietly and observe the natural world. Resources are good and easily accessible so that adults can respond spontaneously to the children's ideas for play. For example, after watching the park keeper battling against the wind to rake up the leaves tumbling from the trees, the children decided to use rakes and wheelbarrows to collect the leaves strewn over the grassed area in the nursery grounds into a huge pile themselves. Further exciting experiences were developed when the children tried in vain to catch some of the leaves as they fell from the trees before they reached the ground. This natural extension of the 'autumn' theme was one example of the way adults extend the planned curriculum to meet the interests of the children.

19. Children with special educational needs and those who are learning to speak English have full and equal access to the curriculum. Because the staff know the children very well, they either support them individually or adapt activities to ensure they make good progress towards their targets.
20. The curriculum is enriched with the wide range of visits and visitors who come to the school. The children watch puppet shows and travel on the train to Downham Market. Good use is made of the local area with walks to look at signs of spring and autumn, and at the local buildings. The children have visited the seaside at Hunstanton and the local college to try their hand at bricklaying. The very good links and visits with local schools ensure that the children are ready to start school in their reception classes.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The care that the school takes of children is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are very good procedures for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of the children, including child protection.
- The children receive very good guidance to help them get the most out of activities.
- Adults respond positively to children's choices about what they want to do next.
- Induction procedures are very good.

### **Commentary**

21. Child protection procedures are in place with the headteacher assuming the role of designated person. All staff are aware of their responsibilities in this regard. Routines for dealing with first aid, medicines and accidents are well established with all staff having basic training in emergency first aid. The Health and Safety policy contains appropriate procedures which are followed systematically and conscientiously by all staff throughout the school year. Safety checks on potentially dangerous equipment take place annually. Practice fire drills take place each term, for both morning and afternoon sessions, and their timings and any difficulties are recorded. Sometimes this is done at the beginning or end of the nursery's session when parents are also on the premises. This ensures that the children have a safe and secure environment in which to learn.
22. The induction arrangements for new children are carefully planned. A large proportion of parents take advantage of attending the Parents, Carers and Toddlers club which runs on Friday mornings and afternoons so that the children can begin to get to know the nursery building and staff before they start. These and the carefully planned home visits ensure that all staff know the children very well and have some understanding of their varying home circumstances. These opportunities provide the first important steps for building the very strong relationships between the nursery and home.
23. The ratio of adults to children is very high and this means the children get the individual support they need. Children are encouraged to celebrate their successes and this means they are developing a good understanding of what they can do and are proud to show this off to visitors.

Some know what they need to do to get better due to the good feedback they receive from adults.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school's partnership with parents, the community and other schools is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have a high regard for the school.
- Parents receive detailed information about school's activities and appreciate the reports on the progress that their children are making.
- Links with the wider community through school visits and visitors coming into the school are very good.
- Liaison with pre-school play groups and the local Infant Schools is very good, especially the transfer arrangements between the schools.

### **Commentary**

24. Parents are, without exception, very happy with the school. In meeting parents at school, informally and at the parents' meeting, and from the questionnaire, they are all very positive about the school and no significant concerns were expressed. Parents appreciate the progress that their children make, the care that the school takes, the standards of behaviour and the general ethos of the school. The staff meet parents on a daily basis and this allows them to talk informally about their children's learning and progress. The school provides parents with relevant information through letters and termly curriculum newsletters, and before the children actually join the nursery the information pack that the school provides is very comprehensive and includes useful guidance on how parents can assist their children's education at home. Some parents particularly value being able to borrow toys from the nursery's toy library on a weekly basis.
25. At the end of a child's first day in nursery, the school provides a short report with photograph, which is highly regarded and often treasured as a family heirloom. Similarly a report is prepared after each child has been the 'special person' for the day to tell the parents about their child's special day. Termly reports and the final report on each child are very informative about the children's progress through nursery.
26. Children enjoy visits from a wide range of interesting people, including the community policeman, travelling theatre groups and PAT dogs. They also enjoy short trips into the town to visit the fire station, the library, St Margaret's church and a particular favourite, for parents as much as the children, is the train ride to Downham Market. These enrich the curriculum and add interest and excitement to learning.
27. Close liaison with the other pre-school playgroups and other family support groups in the town is very good. Arrangements for children to transfer to infant school are well managed with teachers from those schools coming into the nursery to begin to get to know the children, and vice versa. Children have short trial visits to the infant schools and those schools also get a copy of the final parent's report. This ensures a smooth transfer to the children's next school.

### **Links with outside providers**

28. There are very good links with Norfolk Family Learning who organise free sessions for parents and carers to learn about the different aspects of their children's education. Last year, a number of parents successfully completed a course about how to help their children read. This year, 'Playing Together Workshops' are planned for those who are interested in learning about how to support their children's play at home. The course leads to a qualification and this acts as a great incentive to those who attend. The group organisers respond very well to feedback from attendees and make sure that the course fits their particular needs and interests well.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is **very good**. Governors give **good** support to the nursery. The management of the nursery is **good** overall. The management of special educational needs is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very clear leadership of the headteacher ensures that an exciting curriculum is planned to meet the needs of all children.
- The very good leadership of special educational needs ensures that children get the support they need to be fully included in all activities.
- Governors fulfil their roles and responsibilities well.
- Induction procedures for new staff are very good.
- Financial management is good.

### Commentary

29. The headteacher is very clear about the welcoming, family atmosphere she wants to create and this is reflected in all activities and contacts which take place in the nursery. Relationships are very good between staff, with children and with parents and therefore everyone feels they are fully involved in the day-to-day running of the nursery. The commitment from staff comes through in the very positive way they treat, welcome and respond to parents and children. All staff carry out their responsibilities well. The detailed and focussed support the children with special educational needs receive is down to the very good leadership and management of this aspect by the member of staff responsible. The systems are so detailed and focussed that all members of staff and visitors are very aware of the children's needs and this leads to the high quality support they receive during their play.
30. Governors take their responsibilities very seriously and make sure that the environment is safe and secure. They have been instrumental in helping to create such positive relationships with the parents and raise the profile of the nursery within the local community. This includes displays of children's work in the local library. The governing body is committed to ensuring that all children get the support they need to achieve well. It challenges when necessary to make sure that it is getting Best Value from the resources the nursery buys. The recently constructed canopies have made a very good contribution to the children's play, as they are now able to go outside when they choose to, even when it is raining or the wind is blowing.
31. The school responds well to outside initiatives and makes sure that all staff are fully trained to implement these well. Performance management takes individual training needs into account and all staff are given the support they need to improve their skills and knowledge. Staff new to the nursery, including those in training, receive very good support and are made familiar with the nursery's procedures and policies. This means that the children are treated sensitively and provided with consistent messages and this helps them to settle to the well-established routines and behaviour expectations quickly. The nursery looks carefully at how well it is doing to identify its own priorities for improvement and has identified the need to improve the quality of ICT provision in its improvement plan. However, they have not picked up the relative and minor weaknesses in mathematical development because they have been concentrating on other things. There have been good improvements to the outside environment and the integration of children with special educational needs through good strategic development planning.
32. The nursery's finances are managed well and, as a result, staff always know how much money has been spent and what is still available for improvements. The budget is planned carefully to meet the needs of the children and to make sure that they receive good quality



provision. Careful track is kept of spending and any difference between planned and actual spending is reported to governors in detail.

## Financial information

### Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	192,320	Balance from previous year	55,000
Total expenditure	216,974	Balance carried forward to the next	30,346
Expenditure per pupil	5,424		

The carry forward is higher than usual because the nursery still has to pay for the canopies.

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

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

Provision for children in the nursery is **good**. Provision, achievement and the quality of teaching and learning have improved in all areas of learning since the previous inspection.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The richness of the curriculum ensures that children are enthusiastic about their learning and concentrate well.
  - Adults provide very good role models for acceptable behaviour.
  - Resources are accessible to help children become independent.
  - Circle time is used well to give children opportunities to express their ideas and feelings.
  - All staff have very good knowledge of children's needs and plan well to develop this area of learning.
33. Purposeful play activities foster very good relationships and help children to share and take turns. The stimulating activities enable the children to become interested and sustain concentration. For example, when they enjoy making racing cars and having races to see how far and how fast they can go. In the role-play area 'boutique', they take turns to try on clothes and jewellery. Some children are so pleased with the way they look that they seem to grow several centimetres as they look at themselves in the mirror. Children are quick to learn the nursery routines and start to gain some independence when putting on their own coats when going outside to play and finding their name card for registration.
34. Teaching and learning are very good and the children achieve very well. Staff have high expectations and are very skilled at reinforcing good behaviour in a positive way. Children know when to stop and listen and most children help to tidy away willingly. In circle time, children show a range of feelings. They look at pictures and talk about what the person is feeling and are encouraged to say why they might feel happy, sad or angry. Adults model the activity very well, looking carefully at the picture and asking questions as the picture is passed round. Children develop high levels of self-esteem through the positive atmosphere and through their 'Special Days'. They wear the special ladybird or caterpillar badge, get to sit on a special chair with a chosen friend, carry out special tasks such as passing round the snacks at juice time and ringing the bell at the end of the session. All that they do on this special day is recorded for them to take home. When singing ring games the teacher makes sure that all children have the chance to take part. Most children will exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the time they leave the nursery.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are given good opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills.
- Adults model speaking skills well.
- Opportunities to develop language through questioning are sometimes missed.

- Children experience a wide range of language activities through play.
  - The outdoor and imaginative role-play areas are used well to provide opportunities for developing language.
35. Teaching and learning are good and the children achieve well. Most are likely to exceed the expected goals by the end of their nursery year. The classroom organisation ensures that children are able to look at books easily. Each class has a reading area where children can relax and read their favourite stories. Several of the weekly themes build on traditional stories such as Red Riding Hood, Hansel and Gretel or Snow White, which develops the children's knowledge of these tales. Other themes are used for children to use books for finding out and developing ideas, such as those about Divali during the recent celebrations. Children are encouraged to take and share books at home and change them regularly with their parents.
36. Most children can recognise their own name for self-registration. The older children know that words carry meaning and some children can recognise and name some letter sounds. Children are given opportunities to re-tell stories and make their own books. Children are given good opportunities to make marks which have meaning. They make appointments and write down the sales in the boutique. The majority of children are at an early stage in writing. The weekly activity of drawing a picture in a special book and the teacher scribing its meaning does not always extend the children's writing skills, as not all children are keen to take part in the activity and go through the motions rather than improving their level of skill. By the end of the year, a few write their names unaided and higher attaining children form many recognisable letters for their 'words and sentences'.
37. The children listen carefully and follow instructions well. They enjoy listening to stories and are given opportunities to act them out. The very good quality and range of the resources enhances the learning. The enthusiasm of all the staff engenders the children's interest and enjoyment. The children listen to each other well and enjoy using the karaoke machine to give out information to the whole class. Adults support the children's developing speaking skills very well by sitting with the children at juice times and joining in with the conversations about the children's earlier activities and their likes and dislikes for snacks. Opportunities to develop language through questions are sometimes missed. After watching the park keeper try to collect leaves on a windy day, the adult responded well with comments and description but no questions to get the children to talk about this activity for themselves. The quality of teaching is good and in the promotion of speaking and listening staff take every opportunity to ensure children hear a rich use of language. The children make good use of all the areas outside and are able to talk about what they might find in the sensory garden. Children with special educational needs and those learning to speak English receive very good support from all staff but particularly from identified teaching assistants. In a circle time activity, the feelings of the person in a picture was acted out so that those in the group could understand what the rest of the children were talking about. This allows them to make very good progress in developing vocabulary for specific things.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for the mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All staff have good subject knowledge.
- Planning does not systematically build upon previous learning.
- Staff use opportunities well through play to count and talk about the position and size of objects.
- Children have good counting skills.
- Practical activities support learning well.

38. There is a satisfactory range of opportunities for the children to develop an awareness of numbers during stories, singing rhymes and circle games. They learn to count and to recognise the value of numbers to 5 and then to 10. When encouraged, some older children count beyond 10. Routine activities such as break time and giving out resources are used effectively by adults to count, match and do simple addition. Children have a satisfactory awareness of shape and matching and, because of individual support from adults during activity sessions, quickly learn how to complete jigsaw puzzles and sort shapes that are the same into sets. Sand and water play provide suitable opportunities to develop an understanding of liquids and amounts. When climbing and running outside, the children develop a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of positional language and of some properties of common shapes.
39. Planned activities give children the opportunity to explore ideas in a practical way. For example, they use bricks to make buildings and towers talking about how high these are and the shapes they have used. When playing with playdough, they compare the 'worms' they have made. In cooking activities, they count out currants for the correct number eyes, mouth and buttons. Planning is therefore based on activities that the adults think the children will enjoy, rather than on what the children's assessed level of skill is. Although the nursery makes sure that all recommended learning objectives are covered during the year, these are not developed in a systematic order, so do not always match the level of skill the children have reached. For example, in one term the children count to ten while in another the counting rhymes focus on numbers up to five. Because all children take part in the activity regardless of their prior ability, sometimes the activities are too hard and sometimes too easy for some children. Satisfactory learning occurs because the staff know the children very well. They make good incidental provision for spontaneous mathematics learning in their topics and daily activities, and build number talk into every nursery session. Most children are on course to achieve the expected level by the time they leave nursery.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Through the rich curriculum children enjoy a very wide range of activities.
  - Visitors to the school and visits to places of interest ensure real experiences of the world around them.
  - Very good use is made of the outdoor area to promote understanding of the natural world and taking care of the earth.
  - Children have good access to tools and resources.
  - The development of computer skills is not planned to build on what the children can already do.
40. Teaching and learning are very good. The children achieve very well and most are likely to exceed the expected levels for their age when they leave the nursery. The curriculum is very wide and varied and children experience an exciting variety of activities in this area of learning. The imaginative role-play area is regularly transformed and photographs show it might be an office, a garage repair workshop, hospital, dental surgery or box office for the puppet show. The looks on the children's faces indicate their involvement in their role-play activities. There are many visits to supplement the work in school. The local area is used effectively for spring or autumn walks. The visit to the railway station and a journey by train to Downham Market extends the children's experiences, and a walk to Green Quay and going to local shops raise their awareness of their local area. The visits to other places such as the seaside at Hunstanton, Banham Zoo and the Dinosaur Park help the children to gain an awareness of localities further afield. They have regular opportunities to cook, sometimes traditional English fare such as cakes and biscuits, and sometimes from different cultures such as West Indian, Chinese and Indian food.

41. Staff make the most of informal opportunities to promote learning by talking with children about different environments. The nursery is set in parkland and provides a very good first hand environment through which the children can explore the seasonal changes and watch animals play and plants grow. The Very Hungry Caterpillar story provided the children with very good opportunity to consider how a caterpillar changes into a beautiful butterfly.
42. While all of these aspects are planned in a very thorough and structured way, the use of computers and other equipment relies too much on the children's incidental access. When they choose to use them, adults are at hand to support and extend their learning. This makes sure they reach satisfactory levels, reflected in their ability to operate a tape recorder independently when listening to stories and songs. However, because the use of computers is not planned in a formal way, learning does not always build on previous skills, knowledge and understanding. Some children do not choose computers as an activity so do not develop the skills they need. This aspect of learning, while satisfactory overall, is not to the same high standard as other aspects. There are plans to include the recently purchased toys, which the children can instruct to move around the floor, into the planning structure.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have very good opportunities to develop hand control and co-ordination.
  - Very good use is made of the outdoor area to promote physical development and a good range of equipment is available from which the children can choose.
  - Healthy eating is encouraged at snack time.
  - Children learn to use tools safely and effectively.
43. Children have many opportunities to develop good skills using paintbrushes, pencils and scissors. They are encouraged to be independent. They play with sand and water and fill containers with control. They are able to pour drinks from a large jug into cups at snack time. Children make their own playdough and confidently knead, roll and use shape cutters.
  44. The school has recently developed the outdoor area to include climbing equipment and a covered area. The area is used well to link with the weekly theme. Children develop their balancing skills and good levels of co-ordination on the trim trail and climbing equipment. Some are able to use the swings without help, being able to keep themselves going after an initial push. They confidently ride the wheeled toys and are developing a good awareness of space making sure they do not collide with each other too often. There is plenty of space outside for children to run and jump and the children enjoy their physical play. The visit to a local sports' centre for 'Tumble Teds' enables them to develop their early gymnastic skills and to use equipment such as balance beams and the trampoline. Due to the good teaching and learning, the children achieve well and most are likely to exceed the expected levels for their age when they leave the nursery.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children experience a wide range of activities and materials.
- There are good links with other areas of the curriculum.
- Key skills such as cutting and sticking are developed well.

- Children's work is displayed well to stimulate further interest.
45. Children respond well to the wealth of opportunities given to explore colour and texture. Free access to the painting area, allows them to express their feelings and explore and experiment with different materials. They know the most common colours through mixing paints and make their own playdough adding colour and glitter to suit their mood. Their observational drawings of sunflowers are of a very high standard. Activities are planned well to link with other areas of the curriculum. When thinking about autumn, the children printed using leaves and made bark rubbings. They enjoyed the story of 'The Little Red Hen' with story sack characters and made salt dough as bread. They enjoy regular cooking times and make omelettes, cakes, pancakes and vegetable soup. Presentation of children's work in displays contributes positively to the excellent general ethos and to the standards and ideas for children's creative work. All children take a full part and have equal access and opportunities to enjoy all creative activities. Children with special educational needs have extra help where needed. This is an improvement from the last inspection when achievement was judged to be at the expected level for children of this age. Due to good teaching and learning most children are likely to exceed the levels they are expected to reach by the time they leave the nursery.
  46. All children take part enthusiastically in many musical activities. This could be exploring the wide range of musical instruments or creating a musical composition on a range of upturned saucepans. The musical performances are enjoyed by adults and children alike. The children enjoy joining in with ring games, and sing confidently as they act out their role. They really like the karaoke machine to sing along to a favourite song or to give instructions to the rest of the class such as when they are able to go outside to play. This supports their confidence and language development very well.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Children's achievement	3
<b>Children's attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well children learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets the children's needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Children's care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for the children	2
How well the school seeks and acts on the children's views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).*