

INSPECTION REPORT

LANGLEY MOOR NURSERY SCHOOL

Langley Moor, Durham

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 113977

Headteacher: Mrs M Ivory

Lead inspector: Mr Michael Hewlett

Dates of inspection: 20th - 21st October 2003

Inspection number: 256690

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:	Maintained
Age range of pupils:	3 – 5 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	78
School address:	Brandon Lane Langley Moor Durham
Postcode:	DH7 8LL
Telephone number:	0191 378 0830
Fax number:	n/a
Appropriate authority:	Durham
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Julia Millard
Date of previous inspection:	January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Langley Moor is an average sized nursery school serving a number of villages on the outskirts of Durham. There are 78 children on roll, aged between 3 and 5-years-old. The overwhelming majority of children are of white UK heritage and they come from a wide mix of social and economic backgrounds. On entry to nursery, children's overall skill levels vary considerably. At present, they are similar to those normally seen for their age. The school population is stable with little mobility during the year and no children have statements of special educational needs (SEN).

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1569	Michael Hewlett	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage English as an additional language
11084	Jane Hughes	Lay inspector	
30724	Delia Hiscock	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

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

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school where pupils achieve well. They make good progress during their time at Langley Moor because the teaching is good and staff cater so well for their individual needs. Standards of care are very high and the school is well led and managed. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children achieve well;
- They reach good standards in all the areas of learning;
- Their information and communication technology (ICT) skills are very good;
- Teaching is good overall, often very good;
- Leadership and governance are good;
- Management is effective but monitoring of teaching needs to be more rigorous so that inconsistencies between staff are ironed out;
- Children behave very well and have very good attitudes to learning;
- Partnership with parents is very good.

The school has successfully tackled the key issues identified when it was last inspected. Parents receive more written information about how well their children are doing and information sent out now meets all the statutory requirements. Governors are much more actively involved with the school and they have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Overall, good improvement has been made.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils achieve well. In the Foundation Stage, children are on line to exceed the goals they are expected to reach at the end of reception. This represents good progress. Children are well taught, their individual needs are recognised and catered for and, as a result, their achievement is good. This applies to the different groups within the school such as those with SEN and those who are higher attainers. Children do especially well in ICT where a combination of exciting resources and skilled adult support helps them to reach high standards. **Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.** There is a very positive atmosphere within the school which is demonstrated by the very good behaviour and keenness to learn that children show. They get on very well with one another and are becoming increasingly independent. Attendance levels are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of the education provided by the school is good. This comes as a result of the good teaching that children receive. Teaching is consistently good across the areas of learning and staff provide a curriculum that excites the children and keeps them interested and involved. The school also makes very good use of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum.

Partnership with parents is very effective. This is because the school provides a wealth of information for parents and encourages them to become actively involved. Care for pupils is very good. Children feel secure and safe and they are happy to come to school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The headteacher is well respected by parents and has set a climate in school where colleagues strive hard to improve their teaching and the quality of the curriculum on offer. New staff members have gelled quickly and formed an effective team. The school is very well organised but there are a number of inconsistencies in approach and in expectation about what children can do that need to be ironed out. This means that the monitoring of teaching and learning needs to be more rigorous. Governors are effective and are actively involved in helping to improve the school. They organise their work well and are ready to challenge the school critically but supportively.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents and children see the school in a highly positive light. They like its friendly atmosphere and the quality of education it provides. Both sets of views are very well justified.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- Monitor teaching and learning more rigorously so that inconsistencies between the approaches used by staff are ironed out.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning

Children achieve well throughout the school. They are well on course to exceed the standards expected by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in all the areas of learning and have been sustained at this high level since the last inspection;
- Best standards are reached in ICT;
- Children are very confident in expressing themselves.

Commentary

1. Parents commented very favourably on how well the children achieve and this was borne out in the inspection. When they start, their skills are similar to those usually found in children of the same age. During their time in nursery they move rapidly along the 'stepping stones' towards the standards they should reach by the end of their reception year, when they complete the Foundation Stage. Most are on course to exceed the expected standard. This demonstrates the good progress that they make. Standards are good because the work is carefully planned, teaching is good and the needs of individual children are identified and generally met.
2. Children make good progress in personal, social and emotional development. Staff place a great deal of emphasis on improving skills in this area and, as a result, children achieve well and establish good relationships. Behaviour throughout the nursery is very good and children have a positive attitude to their work.
3. Children make good progress overall, in their literacy development. They achieve particularly well in expressing themselves during imaginative play. They enjoy looking at books and listening to stories but are not always given the chance to reflect on what they have heard or talk about characters in a story.
4. Children's progress in developing their mathematical skills is good. Counting skills are regularly practised using counting games and rhymes. Their grasp of shape, space and measure is good and many are able to identify patterns they have seen around the nursery.
5. Similarly good progress is made in developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them, with the best standards achieved in their use of ICT. This is because staff are confident in giving them many opportunities to try out new programs and then consolidate what they have learned.
6. In physical development, children show good control and when they get the chance, make good use of the facilities outdoors. The new equipment and better resources have helped to improve the provision in this area.
7. Children achieve well and make good progress in creative development. They sing enthusiastically and most can link actions to the words of songs. Children handle different media confidently but they are less proficient at choosing materials for themselves.

8. All groups of children achieve well. They make good gains in their learning. The small number of children who have SEN are picked up early and, because staff know their individual needs so well, they are given suitable tasks and targets to work towards.
9. A similar number of higher attainers are also well catered for. Staff make sure that work is carefully planned at just the right level so that these children are continually challenged. As a result, they are on course to well exceed the standards expected for children of their age, especially in language and mathematics.
10. Because the school is committed to including and supporting everyone, boys and girls make similar rates of progress and there are no significant differences between children from different backgrounds.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Children's attendance is **satisfactory** and they are brought to school on time. Children's attitudes and behaviour are both **very good**; there have been no exclusions from school. Staff make **good** provision for all aspects of children's personal development. Particular strengths are found in the provision for moral and social development which is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff create a stimulating learning environment for children;
- Children like coming to school;
- There is a very strong emphasis on children's moral and social development;
- The school is a very orderly yet companionable community;
- There are well conceived opportunities for children to learn about diversity in British society;
- A few parents still take children on holiday during term time which adversely affects their achievement.

Commentary

11. Children launch themselves into an exciting range of activities from the moment they set foot in the classroom. They enjoy the time they spend looking at the various tasks on offer but quickly settle to their chosen activity. Teachers set very high expectations for the children, both about how they behave and the manner in which they approach an activity. Children persevere with some diligence, whether they are sweeping leaves into a pile outside or making honey sandwiches in the Three Bears' House. They are becoming increasingly independent and can be trusted to wash and dry their own hands in the cloakroom or help to tidy away resources.
12. Teachers always expect children to behave very well and they are rarely disappointed. There is a considerable amount of mutual respect in the school and children quickly learn to distinguish right from wrong. Children are familiar with the routines and respond with maturity when it is their turn to explain something or to take centre stage in the classroom. As staff know the children so well, they are able to gauge their moods accurately and help them to make the most of their time in school. Even when activities are too easy for some children, they all still participate happily and do not disrupt the group.
13. The school instills a very keen sense of community in the children through neighbourhood visits and by inviting visiting speakers into school. They learn what it means to serve the community and they gain valuable, first hand experience of this when they meet elderly residents or raise funds for less fortunate members of society. Many also have a good understanding of how to share resources and this helps them to co-operate with others, improving their social development.

14. Children learn to appreciate the beauty of the natural world as they work and play in the attractive school grounds, with a variety of birds and plants as companions. Quiet music heralds the start of 'tidy up time' and children also experience the pleasure to be had from singing well known songs together.
15. Staff ensure that children learn more about their own cultural traditions while not forgetting those that characterise ethnic groups not currently represented in the school. The headteacher is careful to gather an interesting variety of books, clothing and artifacts that help to bring different festivals and traditions to life for such young children. The school has an effective policy for promoting racial equality.
16. Parents are generally conscientious about bringing their children to school regularly and on time. The school emphasises how important this is, but a small number of parents still take their children out of school for term time holidays.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	76	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of the education provided is good. Children receive a wide range of interesting and practical activities that meets their needs. Because lessons are well planned and the school is so well resourced, teaching and learning are good. Most activities move at a brisk pace and little time is wasted. Care, guidance and support for pupils are very good and the school has managed to achieve a very effective partnership with parents.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good with some very good teaching;
- Staff plan their lessons well and make sure children are interested and stimulated;
- Children are encouraged to do their best and staff set them tasks that suit their individual needs;
- Behaviour is very good and this produces an atmosphere that is conducive to learning;
- Some staff give children too much support and miss learning opportunities.

Commentary

17. The quality of teaching is good overall. There is more very good teaching than when the school was last inspected and this explains why standards have improved and children do so well. Improved planning of work has helped staff prepare activities more thoroughly. As a result, a well planned range of activities supports children's learning in all areas of the

curriculum. Nevertheless, there are still some weaknesses in the teaching that need to be addressed so that there is a greater consistency between the work of different groups.

18. A lot of emphasis is placed on children's personal and social development. Teaching in this area is strong. The strengths lie in staff commitment to offering children a suitable range of activities, which build their confidence, and self esteem. Because they know them so well, no one is left out when, for example, children play in the construction area. Adults working with them guide the play so that each member of the group becomes fully involved, even those who find difficulty articulating ideas. This helps children feel valued and successful.
19. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is good overall, with staff providing an interesting range of activities for children to experience. These engage children's interests and, in the best lessons, skilled adult support guides the conversation so that new words are introduced and children quickly pick them up. Where the teaching is weaker, not enough thought is given to the potential learning opportunities that might be pursued during a particular activity. For example, during a story session, opportunities were missed to recap on what children had heard or to talk about the characters they had met.
20. Mathematical development is well taught with staff offering practical opportunities to reinforce children's mathematical language in other curriculum areas. For example, learning to count the number of laps they complete when riding their bikes. Imaginative play is used successfully to reinforce their understanding of number bonds to ten, essential skills as they add up how many cars they can book in for repairs in their imaginary garage. Activities, such as these, help to root children's mathematical development in lots of interesting and practical experiences and increases the progress they make.
21. Teaching across the other areas of learning is of a similarly good standard and this helps to explain why children make good progress during their time in nursery. Although some of the staff are new to the school, they have a good understanding of the needs of children within this age group and are able to set tasks that challenge them to try hard. In addition, they set clear expectations about the standards of behaviour that are expected and, because this is made clear in a positive and constructive way, very good behaviour is a feature of all the lessons. Parents commented very favourably on this aspect of the school's provision and the calm, ordered atmosphere has a big impact on children's learning because it means they can get on with their work unhindered and with confidence.
22. Another feature of the most effective teaching is the way that staff manage children's individual needs. Only a small number of children are identified as having SEN and they are given suitable programmes of work that give them realistic targets to achieve. Similarly, some higher attainers are picked out early and given a programme of work that is specially designed to meet their particular needs. This includes introducing them to early reading and writing skills.
23. Occasionally, the quality of the teaching does not reach these standards and some weaknesses still exist. There are inconsistencies in the way support is offered so that, sometimes, children are encouraged to write their own names on their work whilst at other times adults do it for them. Some chances to consolidate learning are not taken, for example, when adults describe what is happening during a practical activity rather than teasing out the answers from the children themselves. Although learning in lessons is never less than satisfactory, these gaps in the teaching result in children making slower progress and not achieving as much as they could during these sessions.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	12	9	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is **good**. The stimulating experiences provided are open to all the children and a well rounded and balanced curriculum is in place. There are good opportunities provided for children that enrich their learning experiences. Accommodation is good and the resources to support the curriculum are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum fosters imagination and curiosity in the children;
- Community activities are strongly linked with the work of the school;
- Provision for personal, social and health education is very good;
- Most activities are planned to make sure that children know how to learn for themselves and to work sensibly with others;
- Resources for learning enhance the quality of experiences.

Commentary

24. Parents are very happy with the wide range of interesting activities that the school provides. Children benefit from this rich variety of experiences that are particularly well tailored to their needs and planned to extend their ideas and develop vital early skills for learning. The emphasis on children's personal, social and emotional needs forms an integral and hugely successful part of teaching plans for all the interlinked areas of learning. These strengths help the children to become imaginative and curious learners, who take turns, share and are able to negotiate with each other. Most of these children make good headway into the beginnings of the National Curriculum by the time they transfer to the next stage of their education because the teaching plans key into children's needs as soon as they start nursery.
25. The school enriches the curriculum well. There are pleasingly strong and valued links with the community that are noted in the award that the school has gained. For example, representatives of the emergency services regularly visit and talk to children about the work they do.
26. There is depth of thought and much creative expression in the very well planned imaginative play activities that children engage in. Some good links are made across the areas of learning such as improving counting skills for children during role play. Where this happens, children respond very well and make good gains in their learning. Occasionally, chances to make these links are not taken. An example of this was seen during group time where children missed the opportunity to talk about their achievements and experiences during the previous session.
27. Accommodation is good and resources for learning are plentiful and of good quality. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection. The light and airy accommodation and new outdoor provision offer pleasant and exciting experiences in which children can

further develop their physical skills. Set routines ensure that highlighted activities are known to children well and help them to organise themselves independently. These include regular opportunities to play outside.

Care, guidance and support

Very effective procedures ensure children's welfare, health and safety and adults take **great care** of the children. There is **very good** support, advice and guidance for children. The school makes **good** efforts to involve children in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children really feel at home in this school;
- Staff, parents and children work very well together;
- A safe, secure learning environment is a priority for the headteacher;
- Adults know children very well and offer them well considered guidance;
- Children know that adults listen carefully to what they say;
- End of session arrangements for parents to collect children do not strengthen relationships with staff.

Commentary

28. This is such a happy nursery school; some parents say that their children like it so much they want to come at the weekend. Staff make sure that children feel welcome as they arrive and this sets a very positive tone for the whole session. All procedures concerned with child protection, health and safety are very carefully considered and known by the staff. All adults are carefully briefed before they take children out of school and parents feel confident that their children are well cared for and supported.
29. As teachers know the children so well and numbers are not large, they are able to offer individual support for children's learning. This one to one support helps children to make good progress at school. Carefully recorded assessment information creates a very firm foundation for the feedback staff give to parents about children's individual needs. Teachers are confident that they know the children and their backgrounds very well and they offer constructive comments about how to improve what they are doing.
30. Trusting relationships that develop gradually between children and their teachers are at the heart of what this school does best. These are seen so well during 'review' times when children stand with an adult and chat to her and the rest of the group about what they have done that day. They are calm and respond with enthusiasm to the interest teachers' show in their work and play and this helps to raise their self-esteem.
31. Parents are very appreciative of the way the school helps children to settle so easily into school when they first join. They find the opportunities to visit during the preceding term really help children to adjust well to such an important change in their lives.
32. Even with children as young as these, the headteacher makes certain she knows what they like best about the school. They draw pictures about the things they like the most and tell the teacher what to write as a caption. The school has a file of their opinions on record and this helps staff to plan activities that the children really enjoy. Frequent, informal feedback from parents adds to this picture. Currently, the school only misses one opportunity to improve on this aspect of its provision. Parents are made to wait for their children outside in the very congested cloakroom area at the end of the session. They are not invited into the large classroom and so do not have the opportunity for a brief chat with staff, unless they make a special effort.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school maintains **very effective** links with parents. **Very good** quality links exist between the school and the local community. **Equally effective** links are in place with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff provide a great deal of useful information for parents about school;
- The headteacher encourages as much parental involvement as they feel comfortable with;
- The school offers much helpful guidance to parents on how they can support their children's learning;
- Visits and visitors significantly enrich the curriculum for children;
- There are close partnerships with other local schools;
- Some parents lack the confidence to offer help in school.

Commentary

33. Staff are firmly convinced of the value of well-founded partnerships with parents; they are keen to impress on parents just how vital is their involvement in their children's learning. The headteacher ensures that parents receive a really clear overview of what children experience on a daily basis within the detailed documents the school publishes. Although they may not be the most eye-catching of publications, they are an interesting and very informative read. In particular, they provide useful guidance on how parents can support children's learning at home.
34. Most parents feel well informed about the school, its expectations and how well their children are doing. Exceptionally, staff write two reports to parents during the year. The first is very useful as it paints an initial picture of what children can do after a few short weeks in school. The final report contains detailed evaluations of what children can do by the time they leave the school. The inclusion of a greater number of specific targets about what children need to do next to improve would make them even more useful to parents.
35. Staff are very eager to increase parental involvement in all areas of school life. There has been a very favourable response from parents to recent governing body vacancies and several parents are keen to play their part or to share their particular skills. The school recognises that other parents are less confident about helping, as demonstrated by the recent lack of response to request for Story Sack helpers. The new building arrangements offer designated parent and community space for workshops that will have the potential to address some of these issues.
36. Both staff and the community agree that the school plays a very important role in the neighbourhood. Similarly, staff recognise the great impact that community members have on children's learning when they come into school. Local service providers are regular visitors and children visit a number of local shops and community facilities. These regular contacts make a significant contribution to children's knowledge and understanding of the wider world beyond their family and school. They also help to keep lines of communication open between the youngest and oldest members of the local community and this is beneficial to both.
37. The headteacher is very successful in the liaison she establishes with other schools. The smooth transfer of children to full-time education is due in no small part to the very positive working relationship she has built with local primary schools. One teacher comes into the nursery each week to play the piano at a morning and afternoon session and leads the children's singing. Through this, he gradually gets to know the children and they are very familiar with his presence by the end of the year. He is able to discuss the needs of individual children with the staff and builds up a picture of the new intake during the year. Carefully

considered transfer programmes are in place to help children settle in their new school more easily.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the nursery are **good**. Governance is also good and is much improved from when the school was last inspected. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school and understand what needs to be done to improve.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Increased involvement of the governing body has improved its effectiveness;
- The headteacher is an effective leader who has created a clear sense of direction;
- Good use is made of new technology to increase the school's efficiency;
- Monitoring of teaching and learning should be more rigorous.

Commentary

38. The headteacher leads the school well and provides a clear direction for its work. She rightly enjoys the confidence of the parents. They speak very positively about the overall responsiveness of everyone associated with the school. The headteacher sets the tone, setting and demanding high standards but supporting colleagues well to make sure they are able to deliver what is expected of them. Working with governors, she has helped to ensure that the staff changes have not adversely affected the school's progress or children's entitlement.
39. Management is good and priorities are well chosen. They are set out in the school development plan and everyone is involved in deciding what they should be. It provides the school with a valuable tool for improvement. Although the headteacher takes responsibility for driving forward these priorities, there are regular opportunities for everyone to comment and any points are carefully recorded. Improving the provision for the outdoor area is a good example of how this process has an impact on the education that children receive. The school undertook a critical review of its current approach and facilities, supported by governors. Possible changes to the outdoor equipment were identified, costed and an 'improvement' timetable agreed. As a result, the children now receive a good range of exciting curriculum opportunities that sets them new challenges and meets their individual needs.
40. The headteacher regularly checks what the school offers and links any developments well to staff training and the performance management cycle. She ensures that school policies are implemented and are up-to-date. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection as a result of a more formal and effective approach to monitoring the work of staff but there is still more work to be done. Recent staff changes have made it more important than ever that teaching is monitored rigorously. The inspection picked up some weaknesses in the teaching that still need to be addressed by the management if the performance of the school is to improve still further. Many of these relate to a lack consistency in expectations about how much children might be expected to do and how much support they should receive. Where these gaps are present they have an adverse impact on what children learn during the activities.
41. The provision for children who have SEN and those who are higher attainers is good. Detailed records are maintained which highlight how well each child is doing and what they need to do next. Children's needs are so well met because staff share information efficiently, ensuring all staff have access to detailed plans, and they use them well when they are planning children's work.

42. The finances of the school are managed efficiently. The school has a part-delegated budget and some financial resources are allocated by the local authority. Nevertheless, funds are carefully accounted for and reports indicate the systems are secure. The budget surplus last year was higher than usual but was carefully planned for so that funding would be available to equip the community base when it arrives. Good use is made of information technology to support the work of the school, for example, providing interesting newsletters for parents as well as beginning to measure how successful individual school year groups have been by checking on the progress they have made.
43. Governance of the school is good and much better than when the school was last inspected. The weaknesses picked up last time have been successfully addressed and individual members are much more actively involved. The school is fortunate to have such an effective and hardworking governing body which discharges its duties so well. It is a powerful advocate, working on behalf of the school's interests and, through regular programmed visits, has built up a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It fulfils a valuable role as the 'critical friend' and knows what direction the school needs to move in. A good example of this is the way in which the headteacher and governors have combined to bid for a range of extended school services including the provision of a community room.
44. The school is well staffed and resources are good for all the areas of the curriculum. The current numbers of children and the level of additional support staff mean that the ratio of staff to children remains generous, particularly during the afternoon sessions. Resources for learning are good and they are well used. Staff provide children with an attractive learning environment where children feel comfortable and secure.
45. Overall, the school is effective because the pupils do well, the teaching is good and the leadership provides strong direction. The school achieves its successes at average costs for a nursery school and, therefore, provides good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	116,122
Total expenditure	110,672
Expenditure per pupil	2837

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	5527
Balance carried forward to the next	10977

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Most of the children had only just started nursery at the beginning of the term but they settle well because staff quickly introduce routines that help the children feel secure and confident. All children achieve well because the teaching is good and there are so many interesting activities that are set at just the right level. Staff work well as a team but there are some inconsistencies in the way they respond during some activities. On occasions, this results in some over support and learning opportunities are sometimes missed.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals;
- Children learn quickly to take turns very well, sharing and negotiating with each other as they play;
- Adults set high standards of behaviour, set clear routines and children know the boundaries;
- Good teaching helps children to make choices and decisions for themselves;
- In the small number of activities where children might achieve more than they do, sometimes adults provide too much support.

Commentary

46. Children achieve well. The very well ordered day helps each child to deal with new situations positively and without stress. Familiar routines signal the pattern of the day and help children to move around activities eagerly and anticipate what they might do next. They talk about the day's events and gather together in a remarkably mature manner. They show great respect for each other's space and needs. Many of them negotiate with others as they play. Good teaching means that children develop the personal and self help skills they need to deal with new situations they encounter. Good support from adults means that children learn to prioritise and organise their activities for themselves. On occasions, adults spend time ensuring that children complete their work rather than enriching what each child might achieve in the time. This means that learning opportunities are missed.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident speakers;
- They reach higher than average standards;
- There is a good balance between teacher led and pupil chosen activities;
- Some learning opportunities are missed.

Commentary

47. The majority of children achieve well. They are on course to exceed the expected learning targets by the end of the reception year in speaking, listening, reading and writing. This represents good progress and there are a number of reasons why children do so well.

Teaching is good overall and there is a significant proportion of very good teaching. Staff plan a good range of learning activities for children and this helps them to practise and consolidate the skills they have learned. As a result, different groups of children, including those who have SEN and those who are higher attainers, receive just the right level of support and challenge to ensure they progress steadily.

48. Listening is promoted very well through the planned group activities. During story time, children listen attentively and are keen to answer questions about what they have just heard. The teacher creates a really exciting atmosphere and a real feature of the work in this area is the way adults become actively involved in children's imaginative play. At its best, adult input guides and supports what children are doing, increasing their confidence in using language in different ways.
49. Opportunities to improve children's reading skills are well planned through stories, the provision of a range of books in the reading areas and a range of linked activities in all areas of the nursery. Reading is set in a 'real' context where possible. During imaginative play sessions a 'Garage area' is set up with appropriate notices. Customers are expected to 'read' the instructions which explain where they need to leave their cars and how much the repair is likely to cost them. Story time is very well used to introduce children in the early stages of learning to reading books and words. For example, during the reading of a book about visiting the woods at 'Sleepytime', children were able pick out words they knew and anticipate what might happen next.
50. Writing is well promoted through a carefully planned range of activities. They are confident as they use pens, felt tips, paints and pencils to explore and develop good basic early writing skills. They record their messages as they respond to telephone calls. Most children are confident in making marks to which they give meaning. A small number of children are forming letters. Writing is encouraged through an extensive range of activities and adults provide good support as they improve children's skills.
51. There are still some occasions when the teaching is less successful though it is still satisfactory. This happens when children are given too much support or when the questions they are asked are too easy for them. Examples of this were seen when adults wrote children's names on their pictures rather than letting them try themselves and when they asked a question but did not give them enough time to answer.
52. Children's progress in communication, language and literature is being systematically recorded. This information is beginning to be used to help children maintain and improve their progress.
53. The area of learning is well organised. The co-ordinator makes sure lessons are carefully planned and suitable resources are available for the children to practise their skills. This helps to ensure there is a greater consistency of approach in what staff do, although there are still some gaps such as missing the chance to let children try to label their own work.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well;
- Everyday situations are used well to make number work interesting and relevant;
- Children are made to think hard because of the challenging questions they are asked.

Commentary

54. Children achieve well and make good progress in their mathematical development. As a result, most are likely to exceed the expected goals by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. They have numerous opportunities throughout each session when children can practise and consolidate their counting skills. Many children can count to ten without adults helping them and higher attainers make good attempts at counting to even bigger numbers; for example, as they try to work out how many of their classmates are present when they meet up at group time. A key feature of the most successful mathematical activities is seen when children apply what they know in practical situations. This was well illustrated during a baking activity where children counted out the quantities of flour and sugar that they needed to mix. All the group members were able to join in and some higher attainers were asked more difficult questions which made them think harder as they worked out how many more spoonfuls they would need to make equal amounts. Standards are higher than those found when the school was last inspected. This is because work is more closely matched to children's needs and higher attainers are given work which is more challenging for them.
55. Most children have a good understanding of shape, space and measures. For example, they successfully complete some quite complex jigsaws which require them to recognise the correct shapes and patterns.
56. The quality of teaching is good overall with much of it very good. This is an improvement on when the school was last inspected. A feature of the best teaching in this area is the way in which adults make sure that opportunities to improve mathematical skills are set at just the right level and grab children's interest. For example, during imaginative play, bills are added up and places are set at tables and matched to the numbers playing.
57. Some of the teaching is less successful and learning opportunities are missed. This slows the pace of children's progress. An example of this was seen when discussions about shapes in a craft activity did not exploit the possibilities of improving mathematical language. Circles, squares and oval shapes were given out with little reference to any similarities, differences or discussions about their relative size.
58. The area of learning is successfully led. Staff provide children with a good range of resources and these support their learning well. For example, computer software is carefully selected so that children can consolidate what they have learned. In one activity, the software required children to match objects in a sequence and this was linked to tasks that they had just discussed in nursery. Planning is detailed and better than when the school was last inspected because it identifies how the needs of different groups of children can be catered for and then makes sure that work is set for them.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in ICT are very good;
- Resources are used well to support children's learning;
- There is a rich curriculum with activities that are practically based;
- Some children are given too much support.

Commentary

59. Achievement is good. Children are on course to exceed the standards expected at the end of the Foundation Stage. This represents good progress. Achievement and progress are even better in ICT. This is because the teaching is very good, staff are confident and they make best use of the resources and the equipment provided.
60. Through practical activities, the children begin to predict what might happen when they use these materials. A group of children was fascinated to see how the water wheel turned more quickly when a child poured the water fast. Another child pointed out that the water could not take up all the space in the bottles because the bubbles had to have some room!
61. Children can talk about simple scientific processes and how things can change. They learn to observe carefully and describe accurately what they can see or smell. Most can explain how the ingredients they mix during a cooking activity change in texture when water is added. Their understanding is deepened as they point out the differences that occur once the mixture has been baked in an oven. 'It's much harder now and all the water has gone, it's ready to eat', commented one of the group members.
62. Children's learning about time, place, cultures and beliefs is successfully promoted through visits and planned themes. Much use is made of the local area and the children visit local residents to deliver harvest gifts. Numerous visitors are introduced to the children including the local policeman, firemen and crossing patrol. These visits and visitors have a big impact, children are keen to talk about them and they help to widen their experiences. Their knowledge of their own and other cultures is good as they celebrate festivals such as Eid and the Chinese New Year. This helps them to learn about the similarities and differences in people's lives and how they prepare for these events. Children also have a good understanding of events in their own lives. They talk confidently about how they have changed and 'grown up' since they were babies.
63. Children are very successful in improving their skills in using ICT. The children make very good independent use of the computer and have well established skills in moving objects around the screen. They are competent in using the computer mouse to click on pictures and to 'drag and drop' them. Staff select a very good range of software which children really enjoy using. They make good links with other curriculum areas such as mathematics and this enables children to consolidate what they have learned.
64. The teaching in this area is good overall and it is very good in ICT. This is because all the activities are well organised, carefully planned and challenge children to try activities that, at first, they might find difficult. As a result, standards are high. Staff generally give children the opportunity to talk about and discuss their ideas. They provide interesting resources and use these well to support the learning. For example, the autumn leaves and berries that children had collected grabbed their interest and motivated them to work hard when they were looking at the similarities and differences in their size, shape and texture. Adults skillfully made links with other areas of learning as they encouraged the children to capture what they had observed in their 'autumn paintings'. However, there are still some gaps and inconsistencies in the teaching that need to be put right. Some activities are over dependent on the adult input which means the children have fewer opportunities to direct their own learning or develop new skills. As a result, the pace of their learning slows and children do not get enough chance to practise new vocabulary.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

No overall judgment could be made because there was insufficient evidence during the days of the inspection. Children use small tools with better skills and control than most children the same age. When they play with materials such as dough they show a similar amount of dexterity and control as most children the same age. New outdoor equipment provides good opportunities for children to

climb, scramble and slide safely. It is already having a positive impact on the quality of the school's provision. Most children feel confident to use trikes to race, and they manoeuvre well. They avoid obstacles with skill.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children exceed beyond the expectations of the Early Learning Goals;
- Good teaching guides children to learn imaginatively in drama;
- Good attention is given to encouraging children's observation of detail in the world around them;
- There is a rich variety of media and tools for children to use.

Commentary

65. Children achieve well. Opportunities for children to be a vehicle mechanic in a garage are very well planned and guided by astute teaching methods that get children to climb into the overalls, explore the pockets and enter the 'garage' scene with much thought and many ideas to pursue. The very good quality of the imaginative play reflects the good teaching methods and thorough preparation. This in turn excites the children, keeps them actively involved and enables them to practise and extend their language skills. Children carefully select natural materials, including leaves, from the nursery garden. They use these imaginatively as a basis for their 'autumn paintings'. What they produce is of good quality.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
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
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
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).