

INSPECTION REPORT

CLYDE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

Deptford

LEA area: Lewisham

Unique reference number: 100667

Headteacher: Mrs Thelma Miller

Lead inspector: Dennis Maxwell

Dates of inspection: 5 - 7 July 2004

Inspection number: 263281

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2004

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery
School category:	Maintained
Age range of pupils:	3 months to 5 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	126 FTE
School address:	Alverton Street Deptford London
Postcode:	SE8 5NH
Telephone number:	(020) 8692 3653
Fax number:	(020) 8692 8978
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Marita Sanders
Date of previous inspection:	23/02/1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Clyde Early Childhood Centre resulted from the integration of the Clyde Early Years Centre and Clyde Nursery School when it became part of the Early Excellence scheme, providing care and education for children from three months to five years. It has now been designated a Children's Centre. It is situated in Deptford, one of the most disadvantaged districts in the London Borough of Lewisham. The children all live in the surrounding area. Many come from homes adversely affected by overcrowding and unemployment, and the level of pupil mobility is broadly average. Sixty six of the children have full-time places and a further 42 are part-time. Around one third of children are entitled to free school meals, which is above average. Twenty-five children are identified as having special educational needs, which is above average, with only one identified as requiring the support of external agencies for physical disability. The Centre's intake is ethnically very diverse, with children from all listed categories, but most are of Black or Black British – African background, and the proportion is high relative to national figures. On average, the children's attainment on entry to Clyde is well below the national average, particularly in their speech and language skills. The Centre gained a *Schools Achievement Award* in 2000 and again in 2002; a *London in Bloom Award* in 2000 and the *Greenfinger Challenge* in 2000. The Clyde Centre is involved in several local and national initiatives, for example Excellence in Cities, day care for children under three, Sure Start and the Lewisham Education Business Project.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
8798	Dennis Maxwell	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematical development Knowledge and understanding of the world Physical development Special educational needs
9079	Ann Moss	Lay inspector	
2153	Jane Lamb	Team inspector	Communication, language and literacy Personal, social and emotional development Creative development English as an additional language

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Clyde Nursery is successful and provides a good quality of education. The children are happy and busy and have very good personal development because the adults give a high level of care and support to each child. The children achieve well because they have freedom to take responsibility in activities within a clear framework of high expectations. There is a very good atmosphere for learning. The headteacher has a very good vision and sense of purpose for the children. She and the deputies are working in effective partnership with the whole staff to achieve their vision of high quality provision from birth to five years. The Centre gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children achieve well because very good, interesting activities are provided for them.
- The children's personal development is a particular strength. Most children play very well with friends and are inventive in their activities.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good, although some planning does not have clear learning intentions.
- Children have very good attitudes and behaviour, which helps their achievements.
- The care, welfare and support for the children are very good.
- The partnership with parents is good and with the community is very good. The Playbus provides very good opportunities for children in the wider community of Lewisham.
- The leadership and management of the Centre are good overall. There is not a sufficiently clear arrangement for reviewing policies regularly.
- There has been good progress in the move to an Early Childhood Centre, although the present development plan is not sufficiently robust to manage identified priorities.

The Centre has made good progress overall in improving its effectiveness since the last inspection. Teachers and nursery nurses meet at the end of each day to review children's progress and to plan further challenging activities for different groups of children. The planning for and management of the Playbus are good. Recent demands on the staff, however, related to the reorganisation of the Centre have delayed the completion of policies for all areas of learning, and this process of review is ongoing. Also, financial constraints are limiting opportunities for post holders to have non-contact time during the day. Additional good improvements include much daily practice in responding to children and the quality of teaching.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The children's achievement is good. Most children are on course to reach the national expectation – that is, to attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Nursery. Children who join the school at an early stage of learning English as an additional language make very good progress, particularly in language skills. Some children enter the Nursery with above average attainment for their age but overall the children's attainment on entry is well below average, particularly in their speech and language skills. Well-managed provision ensures that children experience a rich and varied range of activities. The higher-attaining children are offered good challenge and make good progress as a result. The good emphasis on children's personal development is a particular strength. They learn to make choices and to co-operate with others. As a result, their achievement in personal and social development is very good and has a positive influence on their other areas of learning. Achievement is very good also in their physical development. By the end of Nursery most children are likely to exceed the expectations for their personal and social development and their physical development. Children are on course to reach expected standards in communication, language and literacy; in mathematical development; in knowledge and understanding of the world; and in creative development.

Children's relationships with others are excellent and follow from the excellent promotion of relationships and racial harmony by the Centre. **The children's personal development is very good.** Many children become absorbed in their activities, for example when examining fresh fish or in making coloured sand pictures. Children take delight in their rich surroundings. **Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and has a strong impact on their achievement.** Most children have very good behaviour, and adults support with firmness and understanding the few children who find consistent good behaviour difficult. Adults respond appropriately to the few minor incidents which occur and children are soon to be seen playing happily together again. The level of attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The Centre provides a good quality of education which has a significant impact on the children's development. The quality of teaching is good, with a significant proportion of very good teaching, which indicates good improvement since the last inspection. The adults in each class form an effective team providing a good balance of active engagement in planned activities at times and of quiet, reassuring support at other times. The way members of staff promote equality of opportunity for all children is a strength of provision. Some adults are highly skilled at sustaining discussion and questions, for example about the taste and feel of fruits, so that children learn confidently. Adults make perceptive observations of the children. This assessment information is not always fed back into daily planning, however, to sharpen the learning intentions for activities and to discuss with children about what they could learn. The Centre provides a very good selection of activities which challenge the children. The accommodation and resources are very good; the outside area offers many opportunities for children to explore their environment. The Centre provides a very good level of care, welfare and support. The general health and safety are good. The children have excellent trusting relationships with an adult, which helps their personal development. The partnership with parents is good and with the community is very good. Many visitors enrich the children's experiences. The Playbus is managed well and offers good opportunities for the children near the seven sites which are visited each week. This arrangement ensures very good inclusion for children.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the Centre are good. The headteacher gives dedicated commitment for the best provision possible. The senior members of staff have a good understanding of arrangements to promote a smooth transfer for the children through the different areas of the Centre. The process of integration is successful in providing continuity of expectation and experiences even though it is at an early stage. The appointment of senior members of staff is helping. The governance of the Centre is good. Members of the governing body have a good understanding of strengths but are less sure of weaknesses. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met and financial management is good. The work of the bursar is effective. The Centre recognises that there are financial issues to address.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE CENTRE

Parents have a very good opinion of the Centre. A very few parents feel they are not informed about how their children are getting on or how they may help their children at home. Inspectors find that communication is usually good. Children show by their enthusiasm for the activities and enjoyment with friends that they think the Centre is good.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Set out sharper learning intentions in planning, drawing upon national guidance.
- Update policies for the six areas of learning within one year; and establish a three year review cycle for all appropriate policies.
- Prepare a more focused development plan for the whole Centre which acts as a robust management tool for identified priorities and enables senior staff to manage their commitments.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning

Children achieve well. Most children are on course to reach standards appropriate for the age by the end of Nursery. Children learning English as an additional language achieve very well in their language development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because thoughtful teaching and good provision are effective.
- Children achieve very well in their personal and social development and in their physical development.
- Children with special educational needs achieve well.

Commentary

1. Good management, carefully chosen activities and a high level of care come together to create a busy and purposeful environment where children are motivated to explore and learn. As a result, they achieve well or very well across all areas of learning. This is particularly evident in their personal and social development since children form excellent relationships with others and sustain long periods of concentration during their activities. Children learning English as an additional language achieve very well as a result of the carefully targeted support and very good management. Those identified as having special educational needs achieve well because adult support is focused well on their needs and their progress is monitored closely. Children are on course to exceed the expectation in their personal, social and emotional development and in their physical development by the end of Nursery. They are on course to reach the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Nursery in communication, language and literacy; in their mathematical development; in their knowledge and understanding of the world; and in their creative development. Standards have been maintained or improved in the several areas of learning since the last inspection.
2. The children gain confidence and independence because they are encouraged and supported in this as a priority by all staff. The children are helped to develop very good learning habits, such as taking part in shared discussions during focused activities and learning to play co-operatively with others. The well-planned and stimulating environment promotes children's motivation and interest. A particularly strong feature is how children know it is acceptable to make their own decisions. This is because teachers and other adults establish clear boundaries for learning and behaviour within which children are free to explore. Children use their initiative to develop their play or focused task, for example carrying vessels of water for washing up, choosing what to buy in a shop or finding a good way to roll a hoop. The excellent framework of high expectations for responsible behaviour combined with consideration is highly effective in promoting the children's growth in personal and social development. The great majority of children are likely to reach the expectation for their personal and social development comfortably and most children will exceed it.
3. Teachers and other adults take every opportunity to extend children's language development. Children develop their speaking and listening skills well as they talk about their observations and ideas in response to the well-chosen activities and opportunities for imaginative play. Many children are learning to listen and to share ideas with others. Children are generally confident in developing their early writing skills because adults introduce early writing skills as a natural part of activities. Children have an early understanding that stories and books hold meaning, which is encouraged by the good emphasis teachers give to a love of books and early reading skills. They also build phrases and speech patterns from singing songs and

rhymes, which form an important part of the planned programme. Children are on course to reach the expectation in communication, language and literacy by the end of Nursery and a few children will exceed it. Children with special educational needs achieve very well; some, but not all, of these children are on course to reach the expectation.

4. Children achieve well in their mathematical development and are on course to reach the expectation for the age by the end of Nursery. Children achieve well and gain confidence with early counting skills and geometrical ideas because teachers provide many interesting activities that involve number and other mathematical ideas. Their mathematical understanding is enhanced through experiences of routes, surface, fitting, matching and counting related to many of the focused activities each day. Children's play outside often involves quantity, direction, speed, shape and position. They show good developing knowledge of these and many more early mathematical ideas by their use in constructive play. Children also achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of the world and most children are on course to reach the expectation by the end of Nursery. They explore simple properties of materials and become familiar with how things work through the wide range of planned and free-choice activities. Children develop the early scientific skills of observing the effects of their actions and testing materials through their daily experiences. For example, they have good opportunities to examine fruits, fish, magnets and many materials as a broad basis for their learning. They achieve well because adults promote observation and reasoning through careful discussion. Children also understand several routines of everyday life and they know about cleanliness and personal hygiene. They also take a close interest in the variety of animal and plant life and understand something of their needs through growing plants and feeding birds.
5. Children achieve very well in their physical development and standards exceed the expectation for the age because provision is very good. Children develop their physical skills, such as climbing, jumping and swinging from a rope, through the wide range of resources and imaginative activities. They climb confidently on the climbing frame and are learning to hold their weight and co-ordinate their movements. The open carts provide good opportunities for children to judge speed and distance and most manoeuvre them well around the paths. Higher-attaining children adapt pushchairs as scooters and are very skilled in controlling them. Most children have good control and skill with small apparatus for the age. They also develop early manipulative skills of pouring, folding and painting well. Most older children have good development in the skills for early writing. Children achieve well in their creative development and are in line to meet the expectation because the Centre gives a high priority to creative skills in art, music and outdoor play. This area has shown improvement since the last inspection. Children exceed the expectation in music, particularly in their rhythm work and singing. They also demonstrate good imagination and skills while composing pictures and models. Children love to sing and make music and many know several phrases and song patterns. Many children think creatively and use their imagination well because adults set up imaginative play areas successfully. Children frequently enter into role, often showing that they understand many home routines such as cooking and cleaning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The children's attitudes to the Centre and their behaviour are very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance levels are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour in the classroom help them to achieve well.
- Relationships amongst children and between children and staff are excellent. This is the result of the very caring ethos of the school and the very good example set by staff.

- Children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported very well in lessons, at lunchtimes and at playtimes.
- The Centre sets high expectations for children’s conduct and stimulates in them a desire to learn.

Commentary

6. Children show very good attitudes to learning. They listen attentively and undertake tasks enthusiastically. This is the result of good teaching where teachers maintain a high level of interest and set appropriately challenging tasks that ensure that children of all levels of attainment have the opportunity to achieve well.
7. Standards of behaviour are very good, and sometimes excellent, in the classrooms and around the school. For example, excellent behaviour was noted during the lunchtime sessions when children sat very patiently waiting to be served. They ate their lunches very well, quietly chatting and being extremely polite to each other and the staff. During play sessions pupils play harmoniously together. They are fully aware of the high standards expected and insisted upon by all staff. The very caring ethos of the school results in children knowing right from wrong and showing consideration for others. No signs of aggressive behaviour were seen. Any incidents of challenging behaviour are dealt with appropriately and efficiently. Racial harmony is promoted very well.
8. Children are encouraged to become independent and they willingly take on tasks appropriate to their age. Children are aware of the need to do things for themselves. For example, one boy asked an inspector to help him with his belt and two girls standing nearby immediately said, ‘Don’t help him – he can do it himself’ – and he did!
9. Children work together very well in groups. They show consideration and respect for the feelings of others and enjoy their activities. Members of staff give a very positive lead in engendering excellent relationships, for example by giving praise and encouragement as well as acting as excellent role models. Children are very proud when they are praised for doing something worthwhile.
10. Provision for children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The very good ethos of the Centre helps to promote spiritual development. All children are valued and their confidence and self-esteem are boosted. Their social and moral development is promoted very well through very skilful behaviour management and the excellent relationships within the whole community. The Centre ensures children experience the traditions of a wide range of cultures as well as their own, but there is a lack of written examples of different languages in the displays around the building to reflect the wealth of different cultures and traditions represented by the children.
11. Attendance levels and punctuality at the Centre are good and any unexplained absences are followed up rigorously.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The Centre provides a good quality of education and has several very good features. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers and other adults provide a very good curriculum with many very good opportunities for enrichment. The Centre provides good care, welfare, health and safety. The links with parents are good and with the community are very good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. There are good assessment procedures, which inform the interventions with children.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good teaching promotes good learning and achievement amongst the children.
- Teachers and other adults have a very good knowledge of each child. Those with special educational needs are identified carefully to match provision to their needs.
- Teachers give a very good emphasis to encouraging children’s personal development.
- Assessment procedures are good but do not always inform planning to make learning intentions clear for differing groups of children.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	9 (29%)	17 (55%)	4 (13%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

12. The quality of teaching and learning is good, indicating good improvement since the last inspection. Teachers and other adults understand the children’s learning needs. They recognise that many children enter the Nursery with poorly developed communication skills and they promote purposeful discussion and talk. Adults place a very strong emphasis on encouraging children to work and play together because this encourages them to take responsibility. Teachers and other adults plan well for a rich and imaginative selection of activities overall. Long-term planning provides a good framework by which to develop activities and make links across areas of learning. Medium- and short-term planning shows good attention to each area of learning, although the learning intentions are not expressed clearly as to what different groups of children should experience and learn. There is very good established practice whereby each class team meets at the end of each day to review children’s progress and to take account of their learning in planning for the next day. The teacher and other adults managing the Playbus ensure that they provide a good variety of purposeful activities and promote learning through thoughtful interventions.
13. The teachers have good classroom management, including for the outside areas, which are organised as an integral part of provision. Activities and resources are set out invitingly so that children have space to work and have access to a good variety of experiences. The good choice of activities reflects the teachers’ good subject knowledge and understanding of the children’s stages of learning, so that there is a good level of stimulus and challenge. Staff-led activities are organised well to provide structure for the day, and children are usually keen to work with an adult. Adults promote excellent relationships with the children and are particularly sensitive in responding to their personal needs. Adults listen to any form of upset or dispute, helping to resolve children’s feelings and to re-establish positive attitudes. There is a very good insistence on good behaviour. These attributes are highly effective in promoting children’s personal development and achievement.
14. Teachers and other adults are generally skilled at promoting children’s learning through discussion and questioning. The Centre rightly places a very strong emphasis on children’s spoken language, which has a good impact on their achievement in all areas. Staff help children to observe interesting and relevant things, such as the line of seeds inside a banana, the scales on a fish or how magnets work. Many of the discussions are purposeful and extend children’s understanding, although some lack focus, partly because the learning intentions are not sufficiently specific. Children are encouraged to feel satisfied with their work and efforts. Many examples of children’s work are displayed to advantage, valuing what they produce. Adults target individual children for certain activities in response to their good observation and assessment procedures. In general, their approach ensures that all children have good access to planned adult-led activities as well as good opportunities to choose. This also

applies to the provision on the Playbus, which is good and makes a valuable contribution to children's learning in the areas where it is sited.

15. Adults provide well for children who have little English and they give a careful emphasis to new vocabulary. The children with special educational needs (SEN) or more challenging behaviour are given additional support which is effective in helping them to extend their attention and to form good relationships as a preliminary to learning. Targets for these children are set carefully and are reviewed at least termly. The Centre has very thorough procedures for assessing and tracking the attainment and progress of children who have SEN. The information is used well to create individual learning programmes where appropriate.
16. The Centre's assessment procedures are good. Teachers and other adults make perceptive observations of the children during planned and free-choice activities. Daily observation notes in the early years room are collated helpfully to build a picture of children's progress. These are written up well by the senior child officer into a comprehensive report as each child transfers to the Nursery, forming a valuable basis for the next stage of education. In an example of very good practice in the Nursery classes, teachers evaluate each child's progress each day after school. In this way, observations on successes and difficulties are shared and planning is adapted for the following day. A further example of good practice is that adults make regular ten-minute assessment observations of each child, which are used to build a profile and to inform further teaching. However, the learning intentions set out in daily and medium-term planning are not usually specific enough about the detail to be discussed in order to support adults in working with individuals or groups of children.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided by the Centre is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- An imaginative curriculum provides a rich and balanced basis for learning and helps children to achieve well.
- The effective team work and good leadership of the teachers, skilful nursery nurses and support staff have a very positive impact on children's achievement.
- Leadership, management and evaluation of the curriculum are good.
- The newly extended accommodation and the resources for learning are very good and used well by staff to promote learning.

Commentary

17. The curriculum is innovative and linked well to the national areas of learning. It provides a rich and balanced basis for children's learning, enabling children to achieve well. It is matched well and relevant to individual needs and prepares children well for the next stage of their education. Children enjoy coming to the Centre and are very happy with the provision made for them.
18. There have been some good improvements in the curricular provision since the last inspection. Systems are now in place for using knowledge of individual children to plan the different activities for them. As a result, all children, girls and boys, experience enough breadth and balance in what they do to ensure their rounded development. Children's attainment is now monitored closely to ensure that their future work is appropriate. The development of physical skills out of doors is very effective. Comprehensive, individual education plans ensure that children have their special educational needs met fully. Some curriculum policies still need updating or review as part of an on-going programme. The good leadership and management of the Centre, particularly the leadership of the two deputy headteachers, have had a strong influence on these improvements.

19. All areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum are taught in each session. Constant use of both outdoor and indoor areas for many of the activities promotes skills in more than one area of learning, which, though inter-linked, do not lose their separate identities. Activities are planned around several themes, which have relevance and meaning for children and enhance their learning. The themes of 'Growth' and 'The Great Outdoors' currently trigger many activities. Plants and germinated seeds are tended, and children can observe natural forms such as bees' legs through the powerful computer-linked microscope. These activities arouse children's curiosity well about the world around them. The very good emphasis throughout the Nursery on children's personal, social and emotional development and early language skills promotes high achievement in these areas. Physical skills are very well developed indoors and outside through the good mix of planned and free-choice activities. Visits to local amenities and work with computers add relevant interest for children. Careful routines are established through a carefully planned system of adult-led and general tasks, which children adjust to very well. The 'key worker' system, whereby staff work closely with, and monitor, the learning of a small group of children, is very effective in meeting individual needs. Talking regularly with the children ensures that their views are incorporated into planning effectively. A formal team meeting takes place daily in each class when all members of staff review teaching and learning. This means that individual children are monitored daily, have appropriate experiences and are included fully.
20. The curriculum is enhanced by the very effective use of the community. Visits to the seaside, a local swimming pool, Tate Modern, the Science Museum, Chinatown, the Tower of London, the Victoria and Albert Museum and local shops and markets all enrich the children's experiences and develop their understanding. A breakfast club and an after-school club provide other experiences for full-time children. Provision for the extended day is very good, with activities arranged to meet children's needs. This contributes to the high level of achievement in their personal, social and emotional development. Arising from the Centre's recognition of the importance of parents in children's development, several other innovative projects to support families and carers have been introduced and are having an impact on the quality of experience and children's learning. These include family numeracy and literacy programmes, 'drop-in' sessions, a toy library, and support services for young families. The Playbus makes a good contribution to children's learning in the community and members of staff ensure that the activities provide a good balance across the areas of learning.
21. The Centre has an effective staff team and provides positive leadership for the support staff. A few members of the support staff are bi-lingual and can help children in their home language where appropriate. All members of staff are trained well and are knowledgeable about how young children learn. Many have specific expertise, such as in supporting children with English as an additional language. As a result, these children achieve very well and other staff are supported in developing additional skills. Provision for these children is led particularly well by a skilful and knowledgeable co-ordinator. Members of staff with appropriate training and expertise provide teaching targeted to the individual education plans of children with special educational needs, enabling them to achieve well. The high number of support staff ensures that all children are included and participate fully in all aspects of the curriculum. Children are therefore prepared well for their future schooling. Accommodation and resources are particularly good. They contribute to the very good progress children make and to the richness of the curriculum, which flows constantly between the indoor and outdoor play areas. Particularly high quality resources for all areas are used well by staff, including their good use of ICT and photography to record achievement.
22. Children who have special educational needs receive very good targeted support. As a result of the consistently good standard of teaching, and additional outside support and therapy, they achieve well in all the areas of learning. Their individual education plans enable them to make very good progress towards a specific number of attainable, focused targets. Members of staff keep detailed records of reviews and comprehensive portfolios of children's work and progress. The strong leadership of the co-ordinator for special educational needs has a

significant effect on the provision in this area. Parents are consulted and informed about their children's progress at all stages and staff routinely work very well in developing partnerships with the families.

Care, guidance and support

The care, guidance and support of children are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children feel very secure and well cared for in the Centre.
- Children have excellent and trusting relationships with all adults in the Centre.
- Children achieve well because their progress and personal development are closely monitored.
- Children are introduced into the life of the Centre very well.

Commentary

23. The Centre provides a happy environment that is conducive to learning. Child protection procedures are good and there is good liaison with other agencies. Close attention is paid to health and safety issues. Senior members of staff are aware of the need to organise further training for staff, however, and to have regular, formal and documented risk assessments now that the building work has almost finished. The children's healthy and safe living is promoted well through lessons and visitors.
24. Teachers and support staff know the children and their families very well, are sensitive to their needs and are thus able to provide very good support and guidance. The excellent relationships between children and staff encourage the children to talk to them if they have a problem, knowing that they will be dealt with sympathetically. Good assessment procedures ensure that teachers track the progress of all children closely. Their personal development is tracked particularly well through profiling procedures and these are used to support individual needs. This process contributes very well to the standards attained. All children are valued and are encouraged to contribute to the life of the Centre. Staff talk to children all the time and listen to what they say, encouraging their confidence and self-esteem. The members of staff serving the Playbus provide good care, which helps to make a positive contribution to children's learning.
25. Induction arrangements are very good as a result of the very effective liaison with the on-site Early Years Unit. Home visits are arranged whenever possible for those children not attending this group. This ensures that children settle happily when they enter the Nursery. Similarly, children are prepared well for transfer to primary school. Children who start at the Centre at times other than the beginning of the school year are looked after well and are made to feel welcome.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is good. Links with other schools are also good and links with the community are very good. These all make a significant contribution to children's personal and academic development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents hold the Centre in high esteem.
- The very good links with the community help to enrich the curriculum and to involve parents more in the education of their children.
- Parents are very happy with the Centre's response to concerns and complaints.
- Children are well prepared for transfer to primary school.

Commentary

26. Parents are very satisfied with the Centre and it has the confidence of all the communities it serves. They feel very comfortable about approaching members of staff and are very happy with the procedures to deal with any concerns or complaints. Parents feel that their children are encouraged to be mature and responsible. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning by, for example, providing help on educational visits and by attending the Centre for special events such as the Chinese New Year. There is no formal parents' association, but parents have helped to raise money for the Centre by, for example, a sponsored climb and organising a raffle. They also attend curriculum sessions arranged by the Centre.
27. Parents are well informed about the Centre through the prospectus, regular newsletters and frequent other correspondence. They are also informed well about their children's progress through consultation evenings and twice-yearly reports. Children's profiles are sent home regularly to be shared with parents. However, there is a lack of translated information sent out to parents who do not have English as their first language. The Centre has all the correct policies in place, although several are in need of being brought up to date. A few parents said that they would like more information on how to help their children at home. The Centre is aware of this and is in the process of sending out booklets. Views of parents are not actively sought through formal consultation, but parents feel that they can contact the Centre at any time and that they are listened to. Parents have been provided with a meeting room and the Centre organises a breakfast club and an after-school club, all of which are valued. The parents welcome the benefits of the Playbus, which makes a distinctive contribution to children's learning in the areas where it is sited.
28. The very good links with the community include the organisation of a toy library, a 'drop-in' centre for parents and toddlers, a child-minders' group and an art workshop. They have organised a 'community archive' by recording the life stories of 25 of the parents. These links are also greatly enhanced by the use of the Playbus, which goes out into the community on a regular basis and has proved to be an excellent resource. It has forged very strong links particularly with the Traveller Community.
29. There are also very good links with the wider community which include visits to the park, the library and the shops. They also have annual visits to the seaside and to Godstone Park. Visitors to the Centre include the local fire brigade and an African band. Good links with the local primary schools ensure that there are good mechanisms in place to help pupils to move easily on to the next stage in their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The governance of the Centre is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All those in senior positions are highly committed to making the best provision possible for all children.
- The headteacher has a very clear vision and sense of purpose for the development of the Centre and has an effective working partnership with the deputies.
- The integration of the Early Years Unit with the Nursery is satisfactory with some good features.
- The management of provision for children with English as an additional language and of children with special educational needs is very good.
- The Centre does not have an improvement plan to ensure that key priorities for the whole Centre are identified and managed effectively, including policy review and the allocation of time for senior members of staff.
- Members of the governing body are active in taking on their responsibilities.

Commentary

30. All members of staff are highly committed to making the best possible provision for the children following the very good direction and vision of the headteacher. Her very good strategy of establishing an effective approach to promoting children's personal development is successful in enabling them to learn and, as a result, their achievement is good. The excellent relationships amongst the children and staff provide a secure context where all children are included and encouraged to learn. Members of staff are deployed effectively to provide a good balance of focused activities and of supervision with interventions where children are taking responsibility. This ensures that children have good access to all areas of learning. The work of the deputy headteacher is very effective in teaching groups of children but is not yet sufficiently focused on some routine management arrangements, such as a review of programmes to support all areas of learning. The Centre has made good improvements since the last inspection and the integration of the Early Years Unit and the Nursery has been a major undertaking which has demanded time and energy to be successful. The quality of teaching and the quality of the curriculum have improved since the last inspection. The good provision for children with English as an additional language and for children with special educational needs has been maintained. There are good procedures to gather assessment information about children and it is used more systematically. The Playbus is managed well. Some, but not all, policies for the areas of learning have been reviewed. Time and budget constraints have limited the time available for post-holders to have non-contact time, and this work is continuing.
31. Senior members of staff give good leadership and direction overall for Centre developments based on a clear shared vision for the children. They have made good headway in establishing the Children's Centre as a single integrated unit for children from three months to five years. The adaptation of the downstairs rooms has been completed successfully to provide attractive accommodation for the Early Years children. There are good facilities for local families to bring their children for 'drop-in' provision. Plans are well-advanced to create an open space upstairs for physical activities such as dance and games. The three classrooms for the Nursery children are managed well to provide a good range of activities, although the space is a little small. The veranda and outside areas compensate for this very well since they are managed very thoughtfully to offer children many rich experiences. Overall, the senior members of staff have established several good procedures which support and promote good learning and achievement by the children. For example, the curriculum is reviewed on a daily basis. The headteacher and deputy make regular observations of the teachers working with children and monitor aspects of curriculum planning. Adults make regular ten-minute observations of all Nursery children to assess their progress and needs. The senior care officer in the Early Years Unit writes a comprehensive report on each child who is to transfer to the Nursery. Performance management is well-established for the teaching staff and is effective in promoting their professional development; the arrangements do not yet give similar direction for the support staff. Children with special educational needs receive good additional support. The oversight and management of the Playbus are good and make a distinctive contribution to children's learning in the areas where it is sited.
32. Some aspects of school management receive insufficient attention, however. The procedures for reviewing and updating policies and schemes of work in the light of latest national guidance are not sufficiently rigorous and based on a clear review cycle. The governing body does not have a suitable procedure to check and agree school policies, other than for those requiring annual approval. The work entailed in integrating the Early Years Unit and the Nursery has been considerable but the governing body has not monitored the workload of the headteacher to ensure that the priorities are clear and manageable. In this connection, the school does not have a development plan for the whole Children's Centre which acts as a robust management tool for identified priorities. As a result, the headteacher tries to drive improvements across all aspects of the Centre instead of working to the guidance of the

governing body, where each key project might be managed by a working group of staff and governors. It is a tribute to the strength of her commitment and abilities that the Centre has made such good progress.

33. The governing body provides good strategic direction overall since the Children's Centre is established and staffed. Governors ensure that the Centre complies with statutory requirements. Several governors make regular visits to become informed about the work of the Centre. They are well informed about the Centre's strengths but less aware of the weaknesses. They have suitable procedures to monitor the effectiveness of their decisions, for example through reports following a visit and by inviting teachers to address the governing body about current work. They use their visits and observations effectively to agree spending priorities, for example for the appointment of Early Years staff and to retain the services of the bursar. However, the governors have not established routines that enable them to have oversight for all the major areas of the Centre's work. This matches the high commitment but lack of sufficient rigour in some areas by the Centre's senior staff.
34. The bursar is efficient and provides good support for the smooth running of the school, along with other members of the office staff. The headteacher and governors make financial decisions based on good educational priorities. The planned budget for the Early Years Unit staff is less than the estimated staffing costs for the last and current financial years. This acts as a drain on the Nursery finances. In addition, the work of the headteacher and senior staff for the Early Years Unit is not represented in the Early Years budget. The Centre is currently operating on a deficit budget, which is caused in part by the under-funding of the Early Years Unit. The overall funding requires a review for the Children's Centre to be fully successful.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	667,586
Total expenditure	663,512
Expenditure per pupil	7,626

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-54,799
Balance carried forward to the next	-50,725

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is good and a significant strength of the school. The quality of teaching and children's learning is good, indicating an improvement since the last inspection. Children are admitted each term to the Nursery from the local community and the Early Years class after they have had their third birthday. Children transfer to Reception classes in other schools in the September when they are about to be five years old. There is a very wide range of attainment amongst the children when they first enter school, with a few high-attaining children showing above average development and skills. Overall, the children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below average, particularly in communication, language and literacy skills. This acts as a significant barrier to their learning but the good provision enables most children to overcome their difficulties quickly. The majority of children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals children are expected to reach by the end of Nursery, indicating that standards are broadly average.

Teachers plan carefully, so that all areas of learning have a good, thoughtful and equal share of attention. This provides a good foundation for the progressive development of children's skills. As a result of the perceptive teaching they receive and the good provision, children achieve well. Planning and practice include all children fully. Teachers have established good assessment procedures that are responsive to pupils' developments, for example by making brief notes of on-going observations. These are valuable but are not always used in the most effective way to set out clear learning intentions for further learning.

The teachers and other adults manage the three classrooms well to provide purposeful and stimulating opportunities for children. Relationships between children and adults are excellent. The nursery nurses provide good, thoughtful support so that children are encouraged to do their best. As a result, children are actively engaged in their learning. The children take part in a good balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities. The adults give particularly good attention to children's language skills and the children learning English as an additional language often make very good progress as a result. The leadership and management for the Nursery are good and all teachers and other adults work together as a strong team.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children are likely to exceed the standards expected for their age by the end of Nursery, even though standards were well below average when they started at the Centre.
- Children are particularly good at working co-operatively.
- The children achieve very well because very good teaching ensures they are supported, challenged and encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning at an early age.

Commentary

35. All members of staff encourage the children to gain confidence and support the development of their independence. This is a main priority of the Centre and is incorporated into every activity. As a result, they develop very good learning habits and the lively environment provides interest and stimulation to encourage their motivation, independence and co-operation. Very good teaching and learning in this area ensure that most children are on course to exceed the standards expected by the end of Nursery. Even at this early stage, many children are able to maintain attention well and listen quietly. They are confident to try new things and use their emerging skills in English. This leads to a settled and happy learning environment, suited well to very young children, some of whom are just beginning to learn English and some who have

special educational needs. They are supported and challenged by all members of staff to work well with others, sharing and taking turns. For example, in a mathematics activity, children watched others shopping and paying while they waited their turn to pay at the checkout. Children are learning to behave well, and develop good social skills from working alongside other children and adults. They are also starting to understand what they need to do to improve their work. This follows as a result of detailed and sensitive discussions with staff about their previous work, which is shown in their individual profiles by work samples and photographs.

36. Members of staff encourage independence and responsibility regularly but when it is necessary to intervene they direct the children firmly but gently, supporting their self-esteem. For example, when the children are playing in the outside or pretend play areas, they can usually share and take turns amicably with toys. It is only when children cannot solve disputes that members of staff intervene to ensure fairness. At the beginning of sessions, children take off their own coats, find their milk carton and put a name tag on it before settling quickly to an activity. Children are able to work on their own for extended periods on the computers and outside, and behave very well. They co-operate, concentrate on their activities and take turns with others. All members of staff consistently treat children and their parents with friendliness, courtesy and respect and are very good role models for developing these qualities in the children. There is a good emphasis on learning social skills, such as saying 'Hello' when they arrive, and sharing and eating happily together at lunchtime. Children try hard to use the cutlery and feed themselves well. They are supported well by the staff who sit with them and help them to serve themselves and have sociable and friendly chats. By the time they leave the Reception class they are likely to be able to work on their own for increasingly extended periods, show good independence and generally behave courteously and respectfully, sharing and co-operating well. This area of learning has maintained the very good provision and standards identified in the last inspection.

Example of outstanding practice

The children's progress profiles are used particularly well as a basis for discussing sensitively and celebrating what they have achieved and enjoyed and what they need to do next.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is at the centre of their learning and achievement and is promoted particularly well in many different ways. Each term a member of staff with very high levels of experience and sensitivity has individual discussions with each child using their progress profiles, which contain photographs and comments about what the children have achieved as a basis for discussion and celebration. This gives the children great insight into their own learning, raises their self-esteem and promotes pride in their work and is the start of children's self-evaluation of their achievement. These discussions are very carefully led and give children an opportunity to see how far they have progressed and what they have enjoyed. The profiles are sent home regularly for parents to read them and add to them; this helps to keep parents well informed and allows them to add photographs and comments of things they have achieved at home.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All members of staff take every opportunity to develop children's language skills so that they achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are particularly good in teaching children with English as an additional language, leading to very good achievement by these children.
- This area of learning is taught and assessed well, and there is a range of very interesting activities for the children.

Commentary

37. Children are likely to reach the expectations by the end of their time in the Nursery in communication, language and literacy in all areas and some children will exceed them. Children whose first language is English are likely to reach and often exceed the goals in all areas by the end of Nursery. Children with special educational needs achieve very well but will not always reach the goals by the end of Nursery. The children's achievement is good because every opportunity is taken to extend their language. Imaginative and exciting provision gives children good reasons for talking, safe in the knowledge that staff will listen to them with respect and interest. Adults keep useful records of the language development of children. Learners at a very early stage of English are supported particularly well by all adults and some bi-lingual staff, who are well trained and skilled. This ensures that the children with the greatest need get the necessary support. Children develop their speaking and listening skills well through pretend and imaginative play, for example, in the pretend supermarket or the outside play areas, or when going outside to buy fish at the shops. Some children are still talking while others talk, rather than talking to others, but they are starting to share their ideas and views with others.
38. Children who are very early learners of English as an additional language are achieving particularly well and are likely to reach the goals in reading, writing and listening skills but not in speaking. This is because many of these children start Nursery at a very early stage of learning English and will not have developed enough English vocabulary and grammar by the end of Nursery. These children achieve particularly well because they are identified very early and are given very thoughtful individual support by a very experienced and skilful support teacher, who is also the special educational needs co-ordinator. Their language is also extended well by all members of staff who work with them, including some who speak some of their home languages. Bi-lingual members of staff are a very good support to the children and their parents. They represent a significant factor in the children's rapid learning of English, because they can help to interpret for them, find out their needs and encourage them in their learning. These children show good confidence in using their developing English and take part fully in discussions and play activities.
39. The teaching and learning demonstrate good levels of understanding of the needs of very young children. Teachers and other adults have high expectations of what the children are capable of and provide well-organised and exciting activities that interest them. For example, in a very effective book sharing activity of a story written in both English and Yoruba, children enjoyed the story of the 'Lima's Red Hot Chillis' before talking about what had happened in the story. Achievement was very good because the activity was led by a very skilled teacher and some of the children came from families where Yoruba was the home language. The teacher allowed extended discussion and encouraged children to participate by good questioning. Early writing skills are taught well as part of interesting and exciting activities, with many examples of children's first writing in displays, letters and lists in the pretend supermarket. Children use computers confidently when playing matching games. The teaching of early reading skills and the love of books and stories have high priority. Singing well-known rhymes helps the development of speaking and listening skills and motivates the children to try new words. All children are encouraged to take books home to share with parents, who, when appropriate, are themselves supported in English classes to help them to help their children. There are good libraries of books and toys for families and carers to use. This area has maintained the good standards identified in the last inspection.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good balance of focused and other activities where mathematical ideas are used.
- Good teaching leads to good learning and achievement by the children.

Commentary

40. Children achieve well in their mathematical development and are on course to reach the expectation for the age by the end of Nursery and by the time they enter Year 1. This indicates an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers plan for and provide the children with a good selection of interesting activities that involve number and other mathematical ideas. Teaching and learning are good in this area, maintaining the position at the time of the last inspection, and, as a result, children achieve well. They gain confidence with early counting skills, comparisons and ideas of space through many activities because these ideas are planned for effectively. For example, children played a supermarket activity which was very well supported and resourced. The teacher extended their vocabulary and experience, modifying the task for children of differing attainments so that they all had positive learning. The children improved their early understanding of how to sort shopping items and to match one-to-one in counting. Elsewhere, children carried vessels of water from the tap to their home corner and understood the amount they could carry at one time. They also had a clear idea that each time they added more to their bowl the total amount increased. Children were given a good lead to sing 'Ten Green Monsters Standing on the Wall' and had an early idea of how many were left each time. The nursery nurse then read the story of 'Maggie and the Monster' with good expression.
41. Many of the activities are planned to provide children with broad experiences across the areas of learning. For example, sand and water play, the cornflour trough, making a sandwich, painting and writing postcards provide good opportunities for the children to experience quantity, capacity, surface area and early number. The adults promote purposeful discussion about the mathematical ideas, for example on what is happening to the scales as various items compare are added to one scale. Teachers also give close attention to helping children to form marks on paper that will develop into letter and numeral shapes. Ideas of shape and design are inherent in many of the children's discussions and experiences such as their sand pictures.
42. Children's games and activities outside involve many early mathematical ideas. Most children know when their trucks will pass along the path. They enjoy the sense of being inside their play tent and swinging on the ropes. They know their turn is fair by watching the sand-timer. Children's learning about mathematics is a natural part of many activities since they are using the ideas inherent in their play and use them to communicate their understanding. A few opportunities for bringing out mathematical ideas are missed, for example in talking about mathematical relationships and space as the children play outside and climb on the excellent frame outside, indicating an area for further professional development.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and learn about many aspects of the natural world.
- The quality of teaching is good.

- Adults plan for and support a good variety of activities.

Commentary

43. Teachers and the other adults plan a very good selection of carefully thought-out activities that promote children's understanding of the world around them. Activities which children may choose to explore are a strong feature of the organisation. These and opportunities for imaginative play allow children to explore materials and become familiar with everyday objects. For example, several children spent a long time with one nursery nurse examining, feeling and tasting a variety of fruits. They recognised and understood how skins were rough, smooth or hard; and how the flesh was soft, grainy or in segments as an orange; and that seeds differed in size and colour between an orange and a kiwi fruit. Skilled discussion and questioning encouraged the children to observe and talk about the fruits and led to their good achievement.
44. The good selection of activities and materials extends the children's understanding considerably. They are introduced to a very good range of traditional and up-to-date experiences. Children mixed paints and delighted in the changes of colour. They explored how the cornflour is thick and sticky to push. In these and other activities they found that liquids have different properties since some flow easily and others are sticky. Some children made simple trucks by hammering a nail through metal tops for wheels and experienced the force needed for hammering, adults ensuring they were handled safely. Water play was a strong feature in many children's activities. Some children devoted a morning to washing up pots and pans while others pushed boats along a gutter track to experience floating and buoyancy. Children have good opportunities to use computers and electronic equipment such as tape recorders. There is a suitable selection of computer programs which children begin to respond to, although most do not yet understand the connections between the mouse and entering a command. In one class children fitted disk magnets together and, through careful questioning by the teacher, found that a hand-held one was repelled when turned the other way round. One child also found that a truck with magnets in was repelled by another when pushed too close.
45. A further good feature of the planned activities is how children are introduced to the routines of everyday life, such as shopping, posting a postcard or preparing food. Children have good opportunities to find out about ingredients for cooking and, for example, in preparing and eating sandwiches. They are beginning to understand that cooking changes things. They know that lunchtimes are a social occasion and that there are expectations for how we eat. There are good arrangements to help children listen to and enjoy a story. These introduce children to a variety of characters and help them to understand human behaviour. The outside area offers children a very good range of experiences to extend their knowledge of the world around them. Children are helped to appreciate the wonder of growing things, taking great interest in animal life and the plants growing. Children know that animals move in many different ways, taking great interest in snails and insects.
46. Teaching and learning are good in this area, indicating an improvement since the last inspection. As a result, children make good progress and achieve well by the end of Nursery, from a low start. A particularly strong feature of the school is the way children are helped to become absorbed in their activity. Many children stay with one activity for a long time, often with an adult guiding observations but equally where children sustain their own motivation and concentration. A few children are likely to exceed the expectation by the end of Nursery since they demonstrate good understanding and knowledge. The majority are on course to meet the expectation.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well in their physical development and standards exceed the expectation.
- There is a very good selection of imaginatively planned activities to promote children's development.
- The resources for outdoor play are very good and have a strong impact on children's development.

Commentary

47. The school makes very good provision for children's physical development. As a result, children achieve very well and standards exceed the expectation for the age. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The adults plan a wide range of imaginative activities, supported by very good resources and outside play areas, which promote the children's physical development. Teaching and learning are good in this area, showing good improvement since the last inspection. Children have very good access to outside play, which they may choose at any time other than at a few planned times.
48. The outside climbing frame and gymnastic apparatus offer children good opportunities to climb and co-ordinate their bodies. Several children jump confidently from a considerable height and land with good control. Most children are confident and have the skills to climb up and down steps, and to slide. A favourite activity amongst several children is to swing on a rope, getting a good start by jumping from a positioned crate. They have the strength and control to hold their weight well. There is a reasonable selection of wheeled toys, which extend children's control and balance. For example, a favourite activity is for children to pull a friend along the paths inside a cart. Most children manoeuvre the carts well to avoid much bumping at the bends, showing a good recognition of the size of the whole cart. An example of the children's imaginative play is how they convert push-chairs into scooters. Several higher-attaining children are very skilled at controlling them and reach quite high speeds, safely.
49. Adults provide good, thoughtful support and supervision that help children to play together constructively. They encourage children to play and experiment with a selection of hand-held equipment such as balls and hoops. Children developed good control and understanding of how a hoop behaves, for example, through the interest and time given by an adult in helping them to persist in the activity. Children throw a ball with reasonable style. Many children develop their own favourite activity, as was seen, for example, when two boys threw balls repeatedly onto a sloping roof – expressing great delight when they reappeared over the edge. Several children kick a ball with good timing, although many do not yet have the co-ordination. The adults ensure that there is a good level of safety and are quick to respond when there is an accident. There is no school hall or large indoor space yet for children to experience how to use space and develop co-ordination and control, but this is planned.
50. In all three classes, teachers and adults encourage children to develop their manipulative skills in handling small equipment. The water and sand equipment helps children to learn to fill water containers or scoop sand. Most demonstrate good developing hand to eye co-ordination when they pour water and shape the sand. Children squeeze and push the wet cornflour into sticky lumps, feeling the resistance. They show good developing skill in fitting large building blocks together while making an imaginative boat. They also fit construction equipment in building trucks with wheels, and some children have a good understanding of the pieces and have good manipulative skills. Most older children demonstrate good development in their emergent writing and control of paintbrushes. Teachers give children direct teaching on how to hold a pencil and to form the shapes that will be used in making letters. Children know how to hold a book and to turn the pages, most performing this confidently. Overall, most children

demonstrate good developing skill in handling a wide range of materials and equipment, and their development is actively promoted by the very good provision.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Members of staff provide interesting and imaginative experiences for the children.
- Children respond well to the very good teaching and provision, particularly in their independent learning.
- Children achieve very well and standards of their work exceed the expectation in some aspects of art and music.

Commentary

51. The Centre gives high priority to the development of children's creative skills in art, music, dance, pretend play, drama, information technology and outdoor play. The use of computers in children's creative learning is well-thought-out and there are plans to extend the provision further in using a large space indoors for dance and movement. This area has shown good improvement since the last inspection in the range of experiences offered to the children and in children's achievement, which is good. Children reach above average standards in music, particularly in rhythm work and singing. They show good imagination and skills in using a variety of media for picture and model making. This area is taught well, staff always allowing children the time and opportunity to experiment and use their imagination in activities in art and in making things. Teaching overall is good in all areas with some very good teaching, which maintains the position at the time of the last inspection. This good teaching is due to the very good understanding of young children's learning by members of staff. It also follows from their confidence in allowing children time to explore and experiment. It also arises because staff plan stimulating experiences with a wide range of expertise and lively ideas.
52. Children are able to use painting and modelling materials, scissors and glue confidently and with good skill to make a variety of pictures, patterns, prints and models. They are encouraged to work carefully and co-operatively and have developed a wide range of creative skills. A group of children took particular care in making sand pictures with coloured sand, paint and glue. They are able to work on their own for quite long periods, painting, using computer programs to draw and paint, and making models. They love to sing and make music and are encouraged very well by the staff. For example, a group of children worked together well on an outdoor drumming activity with the visiting music teacher and sang as they played. In a story session they sang 'Five Little Ducks', with actions and enthusiasm while playing with toy ducks on a pond. The pretend play areas are set up to encourage children to think creatively and use their imagination. Writing areas linked to class themes are very popular and many children enjoy 'writing' and sending letters and cards. They were often able to talk about what they had sent. Children are excited and interested and learn well because of this very good provision and good teaching. They also learn to share ideas, co-operate with others, make choices and select and use materials. They are encouraged to comment on and describe what they are doing and through this they learn new words. By the time they leave Reception they are in line to meet the goals in all aspects of creative development and to exceed them in some aspects of music and art.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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