

INSPECTION REPORT

STOCKINGFORD NURSERY SCHOOL

Nuneaton, Warwickshire

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125491

Headteacher: Mrs J A Towlson

Lead inspector: Mrs K Charlton

Dates of inspection: 28–29 June 2004

Inspection number : 264150

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:	3–4 years
Gender of children:	Mixed
Number on roll:	74
School address:	184a Church Road Nuneaton Warwickshire
Postcode:	CV10 8HL
Telephone number:	024 7638 3708
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs K McGale
Date of previous inspection:	22–23 February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Stockingford Nursery School is an integral part of Stockingford Early Excellence Centre, which was set up in 2003. There are 74 children on roll. Overall attainment on entry is below average. The vast majority of children are of white British background and none speak English as an additional language. Ten per cent of the children are identified as having special educational needs and there are no Statements. Prior to entering the nursery a number of children attend other facilities that are available on the same site as part of the Early Excellence Centre provision, namely: the 'Baby Bounce and Rhyme', the 'Dads and Toddler Group' and the 'Stay and Play' sessions. Most children move on to Stockingford Infant School. During the current academic year the nursery has been housed in temporary accommodation until the new building, which is situated on the original site, is completed in September 2004. In the present accommodation there is limited space, particularly in the outdoor area. The headteacher has been absent for most of the current academic year. From December 2003 the position has been covered by an acting headteacher, who has taken overall responsibility for the nursery during the year. She already had headship experience and experience of setting up an Early Excellence Centre. Due to previous commitments for the forthcoming year she is unable to continue in this role. Consequently, from September 2004, another teacher, also with headship experience and experience of setting up an integrated Early Years Centre, will take on the role of acting headteacher. Currently, she is overseeing all aspects of the move into the new premises. There have been few other staff changes since the last inspection. The overall complement of staff has increased from that time giving an increased ratio of adults to children in the nursery.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1718	Kay Charlton	Lead inspector	Communication, language and literacy Knowledge and understanding of the world Physical development
14032	Marion Saunders	Lay inspector	
1516	Michael Warman	Team inspector	Special educational needs Personal, social and emotional development Mathematical development Creative development

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Stockingford Nursery makes good provision for children. Teaching and learning are good and standards are in line with those expected. The children make good progress during their time at the nursery. The acting headteacher and the strong staff team have ensured that the nursery has continued to provide good quality education and good value for money whilst in temporary accommodation.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children achieve very well in personal, social and emotional development; this gives them a firm foundation for starting school.
- Children of different backgrounds and abilities achieve well in all other areas.
- The very experienced staff use a wide range of strategies to make learning enjoyable and to challenge children in their thinking.
- The acting headteacher has been very successful in taking the vision of an Early Excellence Centre forward and all staff are strongly committed to future improvement.
- Arrangements for the care and welfare of children are very good.
- Links with parents and the community support children's learning very well.
- The procedures to check on the effectiveness of the provision have not been carried out systematically during the last year.
- The present accommodation limits aspects of the nursery's work, particularly in the area of physical development.

The nursery has maintained the good provision noted at the time of the last inspection in 1999 and overall there has been satisfactory improvement since that time. Teaching continues to be good overall. There are clear improvements in the way staff work with children with special educational needs and also in the way in which they challenge those who are more able. The links with the community are much improved since the time of the last inspection. Although the procedures to check on the quality of the nursery's work had become much more systematic immediately following the last inspection, much of this work has lapsed during the past year. The temporary accommodation is adequate but the outdoor area, in particular, does not provide children with the same excellent opportunities noted at the time of the last inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall, **children's achievements are good**. Girls and boys of different backgrounds and abilities all achieve well. In personal, social and emotional development children achieve very well. They achieve well in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative development and in gaining knowledge and understanding of the world. In the area of physical development children's achievements are good overall. They develop their fine manipulative skills very well and they learn to use small equipment, such as bats and balls, well. They also learn to move imaginatively. In other aspects of physical development, notably those concerned with climbing and balancing, and using wheeled vehicles, children's achievements are only satisfactory. **Children's personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching is good, resulting in children learning well. All the teaching seen was at least good. Staff have high expectations of all children, including those who have special educational needs, and they work with a clear sense of purpose. The well-established staff are very experienced in teaching young children and they are clear about what they want them to learn. As a result, the quality of their questioning to extend children's thinking is a noticeable

strength. Staff encourage the children's skills in speaking and listening particularly well. They make learning fun and have the confidence to enhance children's learning by using spontaneous situations to advantage. Staff use assessment well to ensure learning is matched effectively to children's levels of understanding so that children of different abilities are challenged in their thinking. The curriculum is good. It is very well planned and enriched by visits out of the nursery and visitors to the nursery. Children with special educational needs are supported very well. The accommodation is adequate but the restricted space limits aspects of the work of the nursery. This is most noticeable in the area of physical development. Staff provide very good levels of care and welfare for children, who learn in a safe and secure environment. The partnership with parents is very good, as are the links with the community. Nursery staff work well with the other groups in the centre, such as the 'Stay and Play' group, and this ensures a good level of continuity for children who attend these groups prior to coming to the nursery.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management of the nursery are good. Everyone has pulled together very well as a team to ensure that the nursery has moved forward during a time of significant change. The acting headteacher provides strong leadership. She has set out a very clear vision about the future development of the nursery and worked hard to increase the involvement of different agencies in order to extend the services offered to children and their families. She challenges and supports colleagues very well and has ensured a good level of professional development for all. Aspects of the nursery's monitoring programme have carried on throughout the last year but much of the monitoring has been too 'ad hoc' and is not systematically informing future targets and developments. Senior staff provide a good level of stability and carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively so that the nursery has been managed well on a day-to-day basis. All staff are very enthusiastic about their work, they are reflective and are committed to the future improvement of the nursery. Governance is good. Governors are very supportive and they work well with the local education authority. They have managed changes in staffing and accommodation particularly well during the past year. The governing body is well organised and ensures that all statutory responsibilities are met. Governors have recently taken responsibility for a fully delegated budget and have good procedures in place to ensure that this is managed effectively.

PARENTS' AND CHILDREN'S VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very happy with the provision and hold the nursery in high regard. All indicate that their children like coming to the nursery and that they make good progress. They say that the teaching is good and staff expect children to do their best. They feel that the procedures for the children to settle into the nursery are good and that the nursery helps children become mature, responsible and independent. They indicate that there is a good range of interesting activities and that the nursery is well led and managed. They feel that the nursery has continued to provide well for their children in the temporary accommodation. Children are proud of their nursery. They have recently made comments about photographs of themselves when they first entered nursery and noted how they have grown during the year and how much they have learned.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- To re-establish a systematic programme of monitoring.
- To improve the accommodation.

These improvements are priorities in the school improvement plan. The new accommodation is on target for completion in September 2004.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY CHILDREN

Standards achieved in areas of learning

Children achieve well and, overall, attain the levels expected by the time they leave, having made good progress from first starting nursery.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the area of personal, social and emotional development children achieve very well.
- In all other areas children achieve well.
- Children with special educational needs are catered for very well so that they achieve as well as other children.
- More able children are challenged well so that they achieve in line with their abilities.
- The limited accommodation limits aspects of the children's physical development.

Commentary

1. The nursery gives particularly high priority to children's personal, social and emotional development. Children settle quickly in the welcoming atmosphere and show confidence in the procedures and routines. They form very good relationships. Their social skills are very effectively developed and they work and play together happily. The children learn to be independent and they learn to make choices about the activities they will undertake. Most are on course to attain what is expected of them by the time they go to school and a significant number are attaining beyond what is expected. The strong focus given to this area of learning forms a firm foundation for all other areas.
2. In communication, language and literacy, children benefit from the consistently high expectations set by the staff across all activities. Children of different abilities achieve well. Very good levels of support are provided for those children who are less confident or have special educational needs so that they achieve well. The children learn to listen well in small and large group situations. They particularly grow in confidence in the development of their skills in speaking and listening and use talk effectively as they work alongside each other. Early reading skills are developed well. Children listen to the many interesting stories with delight, and learn to join in as they recognise familiar or repeated phrases or sentences. Most concentrate well on the pictures and words, and on the explanations which teachers provide. More able children are challenged well and recognise familiar words. Children develop a good awareness of the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they make. Early skills in writing are developed well. Children of all ages are confident to make attempts at early writing. They are encouraged to write their name on their work and many make good attempts at doing this for their age. More able children write their name and sometimes other words such as 'tea', for example when writing letters to a 'tiger who came to tea', with reasonable attempts at letter formation.
3. In the area of mathematical development, children make good progress and achieve well. They acquire early counting skills well and make good use of mathematical language. They learn to count to ten and beyond and to recognise numerals to five and then up to ten. A few more able children learn to both recognise and write numbers beyond ten. They are challenged well to develop skills of estimation. Children establish good understanding about shape, space and measure. Opportunities to help children appreciate ideas such as 'one more and one less', 'two more and two less' and 'how many altogether?' are used to advantage, for example, when working out how many goats were on the river bank after crossing over the bridge in the story of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'.

4. Children make good progress and achieve well in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world, particularly in developing their early understanding of science. In the area of creative development children achieve well. In the area of physical development, the children make good progress and overall achieve well. Most activities provide high levels of motivation and challenge, particularly some of those used to develop fine manipulative skills, for example in cutting and using pencils. However, due to restrictions in the outdoor area there are too few opportunities for children to be challenged in activities such as balancing and climbing, and in the use of wheeled vehicles. In this aspect of their physical development they can still do better.
5. In all areas of learning, girls and boys achieve equally well. The nursery has continued to ensure that children's levels of achievement have been maintained since the time of the last inspection.

Children's attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Children's attitudes, values and other personal qualities are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The staff team has created a climate for learning where each child is valued and where very positive attitudes to learning are established.
- The nursery's positive approach to behaviour management works effectively and ensures that children behave very well.
- Very good pastoral care leads to very good relationships.
- Provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Commentary

6. This aspect continues to be very good, as at the last inspection. Children enjoy coming to the nursery and show very good levels of enthusiasm for the activities provided. The staff value each child as an individual and they have built up a climate for learning that successfully develops children's confidence and self-esteem. Children respond very positively to the high expectations of staff and develop good levels of personal responsibility. Parents value highly the attitudes and values expected by the nursery.
7. Behaviour is very good, and this is confirmed by parents' comments. There is a clear behaviour policy, which is operated consistently by staff and any instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with quickly. There have been no exclusions. The positive reinforcement of good behaviour is working well.
8. Children's spiritual development is very good. By providing activities that help children appreciate the wonders of the world, staff encourage them to develop understanding. This was seen during the inspection when the children watched in wonder as tiny insects landed on the yellow parts of an umbrella and a 'floor map' in the outside area. Children develop a very good sense of empathy and develop a sense of pride in their own individual backgrounds and beliefs, as well as of those of others.
9. Children's moral development is very good. They are taught right from wrong and are encouraged to behave well by all staff. All adults in the nursery act as very good role models. Children are provided with a wide range of opportunities to develop self-discipline. For example, they know that equipment has to be put away after use and they do it often without being reminded.

10. Children's social development is very good. The nursery provides many opportunities for children to show initiative, for example, by initiating their own activities in the role-play area. Relationships throughout the nursery are very good. Children learn to work and play together well. There are many opportunities for children to exercise choice and responsibility and they learn to do this effectively. A good example of this is when they come into the nursery at the beginning of a session and choose the activities they will start with. Children learn very well about the different people who help to support the community, such as the Fire Service. They benefit greatly from social occasions, for example parties and celebrations for festivals such as Diwali, Chinese New Year and Christmas.
11. The children's cultural development is very good. They show a good level of respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. They benefit from the wide range of activities, including visits out of the nursery that help them to understand about different cultures. The particularly good provision in music supports children's development very well especially when they play the nursery's exciting range of musical instruments from different parts of the world.

Attendance

Since children in the nursery are below statutory school age there are no expected norms for attendance. The nursery makes every effort to ensure that children establish good patterns of attendance by the time they go to school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is good. Teaching and learning, assessment and the curriculum are good. The quality of care is very good and children are guided and supported well. The nursery's partnership with parents is very good. Resources and accommodation are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is good and, as a result, children's learning is also good. Assessment is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff work very well as a team.
- Children are managed very well.
- Children with special educational needs receive very good support.
- Staff provide imaginative and motivating activities so that children's learning is fun.
- Assessment is used well to ensure children of different abilities are suitably challenged.
- The present accommodation restricts the use of resources.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 16 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3	13	0	0	0	0

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

12. Teaching is good and this leads to good learning. All the teaching seen was good with very good teaching of personal, social and emotional development. It is more consistently good than at the time of the last inspection.

13. The well-established staff work very well together and form a strong team. They have secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and they plan in detail to meet the needs of all the children. Good dialogue occurs throughout the day and staff use questions particularly effectively to move children's learning on and challenge them in their thinking. They are adept at turning spontaneous situations into positive learning experiences. For example, when one child arrived at the 'train track' activity carrying one of the 'Billy Goats Gruff', the member of staff took real advantage of the situation and encouraged the children to re-enact the story, only on this occasion it was over a railway bridge! This flexibility supports children's learning well. Staff are also knowledgeable about the interests of young children so that they provide imaginative activities which motivate the children and make learning fun. For example, the present role play area based on the story of 'The Tiger who came to Tea' is a really exciting place to be.
14. The quality of teaching is underpinned by close, very supportive relationships. The staff know the children very well as individuals and all children are managed very effectively. The children respond particularly well to the high expectations of the staff showing increasing levels of concentration. Staff are encouraging and good humoured in their conversations with children and, where they need to, they quietly reinforce the nursery's rules. This approach prepares the children well for their move to school.
15. Staff give particularly good attention to the development of children's skills of speaking and listening. All staff are clear when giving instructions and take every opportunity to engage children in conversation. They provide good role models for the children's spoken language and effectively help to broaden their vocabulary. Reading and writing are encouraged well. Children enjoy looking at books and make good attempts at writing.
16. Staff draw children's attention to mathematical concepts as they go about their activities. For example, during 'drinks time' the children were asked to count how many drinks were needed and then decide if there were enough on the tray. In this way children are learning how to solve simple problems. Counting is given very good attention in many activities and children do this well.
17. The staff are deployed effectively; they all share day-to-day responsibility for supervising particular activities and for teaching specific groups of children. Routines and procedures are well established and staff are well organised; consequently, no time is wasted and the sessions run smoothly.
18. Overall, staff use resources well but there are occasions where opportunities for children to revisit activities to consolidate and extend their learning are lost. This is because there is not sufficient space in the present accommodation to organise the resources associated with a particular topic in a way that allows children free access to them over a period of time. There are also noticeable limitations in the way staff are able to use resources to extend children's learning in aspects of physical development associated with gross motor development since much of this takes place off-site.
19. Staff use assessments of children's learning well. They make notes about the children's achievements as they go about their activities. This means that they are very clear about what the children already are able to do and adapt activities well to their level of understanding. Staff have good systems for recording children's achievements against the 'stepping stones' but they have rightly identified the need to improve the way both children and parents contribute to the children's records of achievement.
20. Particularly good levels of staffing are targeted towards the teaching of children with special educational needs so that these children are now making good progress towards their individual targets. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Staff work well with parents and outside agencies to ensure that these children are successful in their learning.

Assessments are also used well to highlight children who are more able and ensure that they are challenged in their learning.

The curriculum

Provision is good. The nursery ensures all children have a range of learning opportunities of good quality. The accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good provision is made for children's personal, social and health development.
- High profile is given to developing children's speaking and listening skills.
- There is a strong commitment to providing for children with special educational needs.
- The nursery provides a wide range of enrichment for children.
- The temporary accommodation restricts aspects of the curriculum.

Commentary

21. Overall, the curriculum is good, as at the time of the last inspection. Much improved planning has been implemented but the temporary accommodation limits aspects of the nursery's work.
22. There is well thought-out planning in place and the nursery provides a wide range of interesting activities that promote the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of learning. These ensure that children are actively engaged in learning and well prepared for the next stage of their education.
23. High priority is given to children's personal, social and emotional development. The effective routines and structures within the nursery result in the good level of responsibility that the children take for their own learning. Children settle very well as a result of the strong emphasis given to building links with them and their parents before they start the nursery. Staff establish good relationships and ensure that children feel secure in their surroundings.
24. Communication, language and literacy is given a high profile and all aspects of mathematics are developed systematically. As a result, children develop their basic skills well. Particularly good strategies are used to help children develop good speaking and listening skills. This benefits all children, but especially those with special educational needs. All children have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum.
25. The provision for children with special educational needs is very good and the requirements of the Code of Practice are fully met. As a result, children with special educational needs achieve as well as other children in the nursery. All staff show a strong commitment to the nursery's aims concerned with equality of opportunity.
26. The curriculum is enriched well by a wide range of activities. Many visits out of the nursery take place, for example to theatres, parks and other places of interest. Visitors into the nursery also help to broaden the curriculum. These include artists, musicians and people who work in the local community such as the Fire Service. There is particularly good enrichment through the work of the local education authority music service. The nursery ensures a good level of support for learning outside the school day by running a book library, a toy library and also many courses for parents and carers about the ways in which they might help their child at home.
27. The present accommodation is adequate, but there are restrictions in terms of space, particularly in the outdoor area. The nursery has made a very good link with the next door private day nursery so that activities such as climbing, balancing and moving about on wheeled vehicles can take place once each week. However, children's achievements are limited since there is not more regular access to resources of this type.

28. Staffing levels are good and improved since the time of the last inspection. The accommodation limits the use of resources because there is a continual need to put them away and, as a result, children are often unable to revisit activities to consolidate and extend aspects of their learning. Both the accommodation and resources are well cared for and good quality displays make the environment bright and interesting.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare, and health and safety of children are very good. The support, advice and guidance provided are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good systems to ensure children's care, welfare, health and safety.
- The nursery provides good advice and guidance to children based on assessments of their needs.
- Induction procedures are very good.

Commentary

29. This aspect of the nursery's work is strong, as at the time of the last inspection.
30. Children's welfare has a very high priority and the procedures for child protection are very effective. The children are very well cared for and feel secure in their environment. Routines for dealing with health and safety, fire drills and first aid are clear and the information provided for staff is good. There are very good relationships established with a range of key professionals from other aspects of education, social services, child welfare and the health service, all of which provide valuable support to the children and their families. It is particularly noticeable how well these partnerships have grown since the nursery has become an Early Excellence Centre.
31. The induction procedures for all children are very good and ensure that the nursery staff are very well informed about each child even before they start the nursery. The system includes home visits by the child's 'key worker' as well as 'settling in' days at the nursery. There are many opportunities for children, accompanied by their parents, to attend pre-nursery sessions, such as the 'Stay and Play' group. In all of these ways, the nursery helps to ensure that children get to know staff and the routines of the nursery so that they settle well and begin to make progress from day one. Staff respect children and listen to what they have to say and adapt learning effectively to meet the needs of individual children. There are very good procedures to identify children who have special educational needs so that relevant support can be arranged as early as possible.
32. Each child's 'key worker' keeps a particular note of the progress individual children in her group are making. There is a thorough system for assessing and tracking progress made by children in relation to the 'stepping stones' in all areas of learning. Overall, this information is used well to inform parents of the next steps in children's learning and to help children play an active part in their own learning. The nursery has rightly highlighted the need for the children's records of achievement to be used more actively to support this process, particularly to ensure children are encouraged to make choices about what they feel should be included.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents and with the local community. Links with other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The nursery is very successful at involving parents. This has a positive impact on children's personal and social development.
- There are very good links with the local community.
- Good links with local infant schools provide a smooth transition for children.

Commentary

33. The nursery actively encourages parents to feel at home in the nursery. Parents are encouraged to help their children settle at the start of each session and staff are available to talk to parents. The nursery listens to what parents say, both through surveys and informal conversation, and attempts to quickly deal with any area of concern. There is a system of 'home visits' to all the nursery children at the start of the year. These are welcomed by parents who say that they make an important contribution towards making their children feel secure when making the transition from home to school. Parents receive good quality information about the nursery, which includes useful advice about how they might help their children with reading and writing. The nursery ensures that parents are well informed about their child's progress both through informal discussion and also through the regular pattern of Parents' Evenings. Parents are encouraged to support the activities of the nursery and many do so, for example by helping with the regular outings. Parents are also encouraged to join in with the many additional activities that are available as part of the nursery's provision as an Early Excellence Centre.
34. There has been a significant improvement since the last inspection in the links with the local community. Since then the nursery has been successful in its bid to extend its services and become an Early Excellence Centre. As a result, a much wider range of opportunities has been set up to involve the community and links are now very good. The provision includes parenting groups, behaviour management groups and 'Stay and Play' sessions for parents and carers with pre-school children, alongside other activities aimed at the wider community. The sessions are well attended and much appreciated by those involved. An innovative 'Dads and Toddler' group is encouraging fathers of young children to become more involved in their child's education. During one 'Stay and Play' session each week, a local health visitor is available to discuss health issues. There are definite plans to increase the activities offered in the coming year and many of the activities are already almost fully booked. A wide range of organisations has input into the facilities either through making grants, or providing tutors.
35. The nursery is part of a local cluster of schools, which includes the two infant schools and the local secondary school. The good cluster relationships allow for sharing of curriculum information and ideas and there are good arrangements for induction of children into the infant schools. The centre has recently surveyed the parents of all the schools in the cluster to look at possible additional facilities which can be shared in the future.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management are good. The leadership of the acting headteacher, governors and key staff is good. The management of the nursery is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher has provided a strong lead through a time of uncertainty and taken the vision of an Early Excellent Centre forward very well.
- The governing body and local education authority have supported the nursery well.
- The day-to-day running of the nursery by key staff is good and everyone works together very well as a team.
- The ethos for learning is very good.
- There has been a well-focused programme of staff development.

- The monitoring procedures have not been sufficiently systematic during the last year.

Commentary

36. The good leadership of the acting headteacher over the last year has enabled the nursery to move forward during a time of significant change and uncertainty. She has been very successful in taking the vision of an Early Excellence Centre forward so that everyone sees how, as an extended team, they can use their skills to improve the provision for the children and their families. She has taken a lead role in a successful programme of staff development and this has resulted in important changes to the planning and assessment procedures in the nursery. These changes have helped to focus staff's questioning and ensure that activities are well matched to children's individual needs. The acting headteacher has worked well with key staff to ensure the smooth running of the nursery on a day-to-day basis. All staff are enthusiastic and committed and form a strong team who fulfil their responsibilities well. They have ensured that good quality provision has continued during the time in temporary accommodation, even though this has imposed limitations, and they are fully committed to continued improvement once they move into the new premises.
37. There is a strong commitment to ensuring that the nursery is inclusive of all and this is evident in practice. Children with a wide range of needs and backgrounds are all valued members of the community. The ethos of ensuring that children work and achieve through play is embedded as a key principle upon which all activities are based. Overall, the climate for learning is very good.
38. Governance is good. The governors fulfil their roles well and have worked effectively with the local education authority to ensure staff and accommodation difficulties have been addressed during the past year. The governing body has developed an effective committee structure that enables the main committee to concentrate on major decisions and focus clearly on school improvement. The nursery has recently taken responsibility for a fully delegated budget and there are efficient systems in place to ensure that it is used to best effect. Governors take their responsibilities seriously and are successful. They have worked closely with the acting headteacher during the year and are ensuring, along with the headteacher for the forthcoming year, that everything is in place for the move to the new building. They ensure that there is full compliance with all statutory requirements and seek best value, although with limited information available from monitoring they are not well placed to compare the nursery's effectiveness with that of other similar institutions.
39. Overall, the quality of management is satisfactory. The school introduced a comprehensive system of school self-evaluation after the previous inspection when this was highlighted as a weakness. Elements of this work have carried on through the past year with noticeable improvements in the performance management arrangements for staff. However, much of it has become too 'ad hoc'. For instance, analysis of patterns and trends in the achievements of different groups of children was beginning to be used well to refine the targets within the school improvement plan but this has not happened in a systematic way during the past year. The nursery has already highlighted in its improvement plan the importance of establishing a more systematic programme in the forthcoming year. The administrative systems to support the management of the nursery are good and have helped to ensure its smooth running.
40. The improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory overall. The leadership continues to be good, as at the time of the last inspection. The procedures for monitoring and evaluation continue to be satisfactory as at that time. Although improvements followed the last inspection, these arrangements have not been sufficiently systematic during the last year.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

All areas of learning are well led so that the nursery continues to make **good** quality of provision, as at the time of the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good** and forms a firm foundation for children's development in all other areas of learning

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because of the high expectations set by staff.
- Every opportunity is taken to enhance children's learning.
- Very good relationships are established and children develop confidence and independence very effectively.

Commentary

41. Children of different abilities achieve very well and are on course to meet the expected outcomes for their age by the end of the nursery year. Teaching is very good, with staff providing good role models, setting high expectations of children and developing their understanding through all activities.
42. Staff create a safe and secure environment for learning so that children separate from their parents or carers happily. Routines are very well organised, for example the registration at the beginning of the day, and this helps children feel secure in their surroundings. Children are keen to participate in activities, such as imaginative play, and very effectively make choices about the ones they wish to take part in at different times of the day.
43. Staff listen to children very carefully and take every opportunity to help children realise that they have to 'help each other'. Relationships are very good and most children are very effectively learning to take turns and share equipment. Staff approach behaviour management in a very positive way, making very effective use of praise and continually re-enforcing how important it is to learn respect for each other. As a result, children learn very quickly what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and, overall, they behave very well.
44. Children are encouraged very well to become confident and independent, with staff often standing back and allowing children to find their own solution to a situation, such as which pieces of the train track are needed to create a particular shape. Many children are quickly gaining personal independence; for example, they take themselves to the toilet and return with hands washed. The staff help to develop each child's self-esteem very well and they help all children develop a strong sense of themselves as members of a community.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, teaching is good and children achieve well in all aspects of this area of learning.
- All children, including those with special educational needs and those who are more able, achieve well.

- Staff are particularly effective in encouraging children's skills in speaking and listening.
- There are occasions, because of lack of space, where activities are cleared away and the opportunities for children to consolidate and extend their learning are curtailed.

Commentary

45. Teaching is good. Children of all abilities achieve well and are on course to attain the expected outcomes for their age by the end of the year. Staff are very secure in teaching this area and set up stimulating situations to engage children's interest and make learning enjoyable. They support and challenge children of different abilities well.
46. Staff place high priority on the development of children's skills in speaking and listening and encourage these particularly well in all activities. There is continual emphasis on extending the children's vocabulary and ensuring that they learn to articulate words correctly. Staff take time to listen to the children and they use observation techniques well to identify small steps that they might take to achieve improvement. Very good relationships are established; this means children are confident to 'have a go' and those who feel unsure, such as those with speech difficulties, are keen to make contributions. Some children use simple statements and others are able to form sentences; all are encouraged equally well. Role play situations are used to advantage, for example the one organised around the theme of the 'Tiger who came to Tea'. The resources are particularly well thought-out and staff interact with children very well in these situations.
47. Children are learning the early skills of reading well. Staff read stories in a very interesting way. They make good use of items, such as a tea tray with cups, saucers, marmalade and toast, to make stories such as 'Peace at Last' come alive. As a result, the children really enjoy listening to stories. Many are able to answer questions about the story and the most able begin to anticipate what might come next. A good emphasis is given to children learning about the ways in which books are laid out and they learn to handle books with care. Children build up ideas about which books are their favourites and speak about these with understanding. Staff effectively encourage children to learn the sounds and shapes of letters of the alphabet and by the end of the year the most able children are able to recognise these and also contribute good ideas about which words rhyme with others. Virtually all children learn to read their name and to refer to books, such as ones about living things, to find information. This is because of the regular emphasis given to these activities by staff.
48. Writing is developed effectively. The children are encouraged very well to use large tools such as paint brushes, chalks and crayons and all do this with confidence to convey meaning. Staff are very good at getting the children to talk about their work, such as when writing letters, and they effectively show the children how to write down their thoughts. They also show children how to use writing for different purposes such as writing a list of items to buy at the shop or items to be served in the café. These activities challenge all children, but particularly the most able, to copy what the adult has written. A good emphasis is given by all to helping children establish pencil control and correct letter formation. By the end of their time in nursery more able children can write their name with recognisable letters.
49. Within the limited space of the temporary accommodation, there are restrictions in the use of resources. As a result, the children are not always able to consolidate or extend their learning since the resources have had to be put away.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- There is good provision for practical activities.
- Good emphasis is placed on children learning mathematical vocabulary.
- Occasionally, opportunities for children to consolidate and extend their learning are limited by the range of resources that are easily available to them.

Commentary

50. Children of different backgrounds and abilities achieve well. Most are on course to reach the outcomes expected for their age by the end of the year.
51. Adults reinforce children's understanding of number and its associated vocabulary very well through specific mathematical activities and across all other areas of the curriculum. For example, in one activity children developed their counting and understanding of number well as they sorted farm animals into groups using different criteria. Staff take every opportunity to develop children's counting skills and children learn effectively to count forwards and backwards and to count objects and people. Songs and rhymes are used very well to support this whenever possible. Simple problem solving activities are regularly presented so that children learn to understand simple calculations such as 'one more', 'one less', 'two more' and 'two less'.
52. The children learn the vocabulary of size very well, for example 'big and small', 'long and short' and 'over and under', during many different activities. Well-focused interaction in role-play also encourages children to effectively learn about size. For example, they talk about the size of the trolls and goats in the 'Three Billy Goats' story. They learn about shape and position through many activities and can name simple two and some three-dimensional shapes. Sand and water play is used well to develop children's understanding of volume. The vocabulary of 'full', 'empty' and 'half full' was being very well reinforced during an activity when children were filling and emptying buckets with sand. Further good opportunities are given to children to develop their awareness and knowledge of shapes through, for example, building with large bricks.
53. Within the limited space available in the present accommodation there is a continual need to put away resources. This limits the opportunities for children to revisit activities to consolidate and extend their learning, even though staff work hard to overcome this.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- A wide range of very well thought-through activities form the basis of the programme.
- Particularly good emphasis is given to the development of children's early understanding of science.
- Visits and visitors are used effectively to stimulate children's interest.
- There are some limitations in the materials and tools that it is possible for staff to set out in the present accommodation and this limits aspects of children's learning.

Commentary

54. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well. Most are on course to attain the expected outcomes by the time they leave the nursery. There is a good range of very well-planned, interesting opportunities which give a good focus to 'first-hand' experience and successfully build on the children's natural curiosity about the world in which they live.
55. The children learn to explore and observe particularly well, and recognise the need to respect animals; for example, when they picked up small creatures they showed very good levels of sensitivity. Careful questioning by staff, where they ensure that children use the correct terminology, helps the children to notice similarities and differences. Staff encourage the children to make drawings and paintings of the creatures they observe, such as those of ladybirds, and these reflect the good quality of the original observation.
56. Topics such as those about Hot and Cold, Living Things, Colour and Light, all give a good emphasis to investigating the natural and man made world. Photographs in the nursery show how children have had a wide range of opportunities to help establish their early scientific understanding, for instance about ice cubes melting, plants growing and chrysalises changing into butterflies. In an activity observed during the inspection the children played with magnets and it was noticeable how well staff used open-ended questions, such as 'What will happen if?', and 'Why?' to challenge their thinking.
57. Children enjoy building and constructing using different materials and they do this imaginatively, for example when building a hot air balloon out of scrap materials. Nevertheless, there are some restrictions in the materials and tools that it is possible for staff to set out in the present accommodation, thus creating some limitations in the choices children can make about the most appropriate materials for a task.
58. There are regular opportunities for children to use information and communication technology, including computers and a programmable toy, and children effectively develop understanding in this area. Children develop a good sense of time, for example by making comparisons about themselves as they are now to what they were like when they first came to nursery.
59. Visits and visitors, for example the visit the children made to Coombe Park and the visit by the local Fire Service to the nursery, are used well as a stimulus for the children's work. Children develop a good knowledge of place and this is demonstrated well in work about visiting the local park, the town centre and nearby shops. Children effectively learn about a wide range of different cultures and beliefs, for example when learning about festivals such as Chinese New Year, Diwali and Christmas.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall, with particularly well organised activities to develop children's fine manipulative skills.
- Staff expect children to try hard and achieve of their best.
- The size of the outdoor area limits the opportunities children have to become involved in activities such as balancing, climbing and riding wheeled vehicles.

Commentary

60. Children achieve well and are making good progress. Most are course to attain the expected outcomes by the end of the year. In all activities children play together very well, and are considerate and sensitive towards each other. They take turns and share equipment, develop skills and enjoy their activities. Nevertheless, in those aspects of their gross motor development linked to balancing and climbing and using large wheeled vehicles, the children do not achieve as well as in other aspects of their physical development.
61. Staff organise demanding activities so that children develop fine manipulative skills very well. Children try hard and they are prepared to persevere even when tasks are very intricate and require a high level of concentration. This was especially noticeable when they stuck tiny beads onto a collage. Staff guide children very carefully in the use of equipment, such as scissors, so that they develop good levels of accuracy and skill. Children very effectively learn to use a wide range of tools and materials, for instance rollers and cutters, to make cakes for the role play area, showing good levels of co-ordination and control as well as an awareness of the need for safety.
62. Children develop a good awareness of space, themselves and others, for example as they move about in the outdoor area. They are taught to be considerate of each other, especially in the light of the relatively small amount of space available. It is noticeable when they push prams around in the outdoor area how skilful they are at manipulating them around the plant pots and other items. Most show good levels of co-ordination and control when using items such as bats, balls and other small equipment, and also when developing skills such as hopping, skipping and running. The children particularly enjoy target games, for example kicking balls into goal nets. In all activities, staff are prepared to model the expected outcomes for children and challenge them through good quality interaction, always expecting them to give of their best.
63. Children learn effectively about the importance of hygiene and healthy living. The work undertaken at the beginning of each year in the topic 'All about our nursery' places high emphasis on this. They also learn to be imaginative in their movements. For example, when using the indoor area that is often used by community groups, they show good imaginative response to music through their movements.
64. The development of children's gross motor skills is satisfactory. The nursery has engaged extra staffing for part of the week so that the children can visit an adjacent private day nursery to use a wide variety of good quality wheeled vehicles and climbing and balancing equipment. This is working well but the situation is not ideal and children can still achieve more in this respect.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Stimulating role play situations encourage children's imaginative response.
- Good opportunities are provided for children to be creative in learning about colour and in musical activities.
- Occasionally children's imaginative play is interrupted by the need for children to be supervised when moving between the outdoor and indoor areas.

Commentary

65. Children of all abilities achieve well and are on course to meet the expected outcomes for their age by the end of their time in nursery. Staff are very experienced in working with young children and provide activities that interest and motivate them. The good quality experiences extend children's imagination and enhance their skills in painting, making, role play and music. Children spend long periods creating and perfecting their work, as was seen when one child made a model aeroplane from recycled materials.
66. The children are keen to explore and staff make good use of a wide range of opportunities to reinforce and extend their understanding of colour by, for instance, matching and sorting objects by colour or mixing coloured liquids together to see the changes that result. Children show increasing appreciation of the effects of combining different colours, for example in collage work and drawing. Good experiences generally ensure that children have the opportunity to develop their skills to their full potential. Children work effectively in both two and three dimensions.
67. There is a good range of opportunities for children to use their senses to explore materials. This worked particularly well when they found out the effects of 'Gloop', which was both runny and sticky and which took a particularly long time to drip off objects.
68. Staff have created stimulating opportunities for children to develop their imagination in role play and they very successfully take part in this play alongside the children to ensure that their thinking is extended. Many children were seen in the role-play areas re-enacting stories such as 'The Tiger who came to Tea' showing total immersion in the character they were playing. Occasionally, however, children's imaginative play is interrupted by the need for them to be supervised when moving between the outdoor and indoor areas and important links between different aspects of provision are lost. This limitation was particularly noticeable when links between children making meals in the indoor role play area and making meals in the outdoor café were lost.
69. Children learn by heart a good repertoire of songs, which they sing with enthusiasm. They accompany their singing with un-tuned percussion instruments very well. They also have good opportunities to make their own music using a wide variety of instruments, especially the good quality large percussion instruments that are often set out in the outside area. Staff are enthusiastic about teaching music and particularly good enrichment is provided by the local education music service.

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	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Children's achievement	3
Children' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Children' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well children learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets children's needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Children's care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for children	3
How well the school seeks and acts on children's 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	3
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	4

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