

INSPECTION REPORT

KINTORE WAY NURSERY SCHOOL

Bermondsey, London

LEA area: Southwark

Unique reference number: 100767

Headteacher: Mrs S Donno

Lead inspector: Mr D Byrne

Dates of inspection: 28th – 30th September 2004

Inspection number: 267153

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
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	152
School address:	Grange Road Bermondsey London
Postcode:	SE1 3BW
Telephone number:	020 7237 1894
Fax number:	020 7237 0499
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Craig
Date of previous inspection:	May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school caters for 152 nursery children between the ages of three and four. Around half the children attend on a full-time basis. Most children come from the local area which has a wide variety of cultures. The level of mobility into and out of the school is relatively low. The attainment of the children when they start school is below expectations for their age with poor levels of language and literacy. There is a wide range of ethnic backgrounds amongst children and almost half of the children live in homes where English is the second language. The vast majority of these are at an early stage of learning. An above average number of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs. A very small number of children have a Statement of Special Educational Need. An above average number of children are entitled to free school meals. The school has been involved in a number of educational initiatives, most notably the Central Bermondsey Sure Start and the Southwark Excellence in Cities Action Zone.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
28076	Mr D Byrne	Lead inspector	Communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development, English as an additional language.
9614	Mrs C Webb	Lay inspector	
18027	Mrs S Mawer	Team inspector	Mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; creative development, special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Inspections Limited
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 7JX

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	9
Standards achieved in areas of learning	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
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	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school. Children achieve well and reach the standards expected for their age in all areas of their learning, except speaking and listening. Good teamwork between teachers and support staff inspires children to learn by experiencing a lively and exciting curriculum. The school is effectively led and managed and well governed. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children do as well as they can and by the time they leave the nursery the majority have reached the standards expected of them, although a significant number still have difficulties with speaking and listening.
- Children make a good start to their education, forming secure relationships, developing positive attitudes to learning and behaving well overall.
- Teaching is good, but weaknesses in assessment reduce the effectiveness of planning to meet the needs of all children.
- Children of all cultural backgrounds are very well integrated into school life and there are high levels of racial harmony.
- A wide range of stimulating activities, both indoors and outside, fires the children's imagination and creates enthusiasm for learning.
- Very good links with parents and the local community enrich the children's education, but effective liaison with nearby primary schools could be better.
- Although all pupils have equal access to all activities, there is a tendency for boys to be reluctant in joining in with creative work and for girls to get involved in outdoor physical activities.
- Children benefit from access to a high quality outdoor play area, but some parts of the buildings are unsatisfactory.
- Leadership and management are good overall, with a strong commitment to developing and improving the quality of education and levels of care.
- Finances are well managed so that the school gets the best from its budget.

There have been changes in the staffing and provision since the last inspection in 1999. Based on the judgements of the last report, the quality of the school's provision has been maintained. Recent improvements in the skills of the teachers and support staff and the impact of improved governance and a better curriculum are improving steadily the quality of education.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The children's attainment when they join the school is below expectations and their language development is often poor. Children of all abilities, including those who have special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve **well** in each of the areas of learning. By the time they leave the nursery at the age of four, children's attainment is at the expected level in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. Despite making good progress in their communication, language and literacy, many children still find speaking and listening difficult and standards are below expectations for their age.

The children's attitudes and behaviour are good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall, with provision for social and cultural development being very good. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good** overall. Teaching is **good**, and enables children to achieve well in most areas of their learning. Teachers and support staff work together well to ensure that all pupils are included in the school's education. The provision for children with special educational needs and those with English as an Additional Language is good. Although staff know the children well, a weakness in the quality of assessing children when they start school and making regular checks on achievement and progress as they move through the school, reduces the efficiency of teachers' planning. Children benefit from a stimulating curriculum enriched by a good range of additional activities. Whilst children learn well, there is a tendency for girls to miss out on some areas of outdoor physical development and for boys to opt out of some of the more creative areas of learning. The resources are good and used well to enhance the children's learning. The outdoor classroom is a very good resource where children develop a full range of skills. In addition to developing children's physical development, there is good access to a variety of activities, including those designed to develop children's early literacy and mathematical skills and knowledge and understanding of the world. The school provides good levels of care, support and guidance within a secure and safe environment. Links with parents and the community are very good. More could be done to extend links with nearby primary schools in order to establish a clearer understanding of expectations for children transferring to the next stage of their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher provides strong leadership, and is creating a hard-working and committed staff team. There is a shared vision for the continued and future development of the school. Key staff satisfactorily carry out management roles. The requirements of the large number of pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are effectively managed so that children are included in all of the schools' activities. Children's independence and self-esteem are valued by staff and, as a result, the nursery has many ambitious features that involve children making choices and having ownership for aspects of their own learning. There is good governance of the school. Governors are supportive and share in the headteacher's vision, whilst also keeping a critical eye on the effectiveness of the school's management and teaching.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very happy with the education the school provides for their children. They like the way the school encourages parents to come into school to get to know the staff and are positive about the fact that, where necessary, they are welcome to stay with their children until they settle into school. The exuberance and enthusiasm of the children during the day is testament to the very good levels of satisfaction they feel for the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

To further improve the quality of provision the school should:

- Improve the quality of assessment so that it better informs teachers' planning, increases their ability to track children's progress, and reduces the risk of some children missing out on some activities.

- Take steps to encourage greater and more equitable involvement of boys in creative activities and girls in outdoor physical activities.
- Devise a strategy for improving dialogue with the main primary schools to which the children transfer.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning

Children of all ages and abilities achieve **well**. Their attainment is at the expected level overall when they leave school at the age of four, except in communication, language and literacy development where standards are below expectations.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress and do well overall.
- Although boys and girls have equal access to participate in all areas of learning, girls tend to take more of an interest in creative activities and boys seem more interested in outdoor physical activities.

Commentary

1. Children achieve well overall and, by the age of four, attainment is broadly in line with expectations in their personal, social and emotional development, their mathematical, their creative and their physical development. They also do well in improving their knowledge and understanding of the world and reach the expected standards. In communication, language and literacy development, however, standards are so low when they start school that, despite good progress and achievement, standards remain below expectations when they leave the school. Standards are similar to those judged at the last inspection.
2. Many children start school with poor levels of speaking and listening. Many children require support for English as an additional language. The quality of this support is good and, as a result, children rapidly develop competence in speaking and listening. Many children who speak English as their first language also have a narrow vocabulary and often talk using short, clipped phrases. Good support from teachers and support staff enable these children to do well in improving their speech and their confidence to speak in front of others. Children develop an awareness of the way that marks can communicate ideas and they develop an understanding of initial sounds. Many recognise their names and some start to write them and attempt to create other words on paper. Reading is encouraged well, and children start to value books as a source of pleasure. Children make a good start at using books to retell stories through sequencing pictures.
3. The rich curriculum effectively develops pupils' awareness of mathematics. Children understand the basic idea of numbers up to five and can sequence these in the right order. Shapes such as squares and circles are recognised and named. Through effectively planned play, children also establish the differences between large and small and heavy and light objects and water play develops their awareness of the basic idea of capacity. Although many children start school with a limited knowledge and understanding of the world, the school does a good job in extending this. Children acquire a good knowledge and understanding of plants and animals through their involvement in the school garden and caring for the school pets. Children develop a secure knowledge of the difference between the past and present and, through structured play outdoors, they start to develop an awareness of locality and place. Most children do well in developing their confidence in using the computer. They are competent in using the mouse to complete a variety of tasks and games.

4. Children achieve well in terms of their creative development. They benefit from the wide range of activities provided for them. Artistic and creative skills are successfully developed involving the use of painting, creating models using playdough and using torn paper to create designs. Information and communication technology (ICT) is also used to produce some good quality computer-generated designs. Children have access to a good range of musical instruments, some of which are from world music, and they build up a good repertoire of songs and nursery rhymes. There is a tendency for girls to take more of an interest in the creative activities and this results in girls doing better overall in this area than the boys.
5. Children improve their low levels of co-ordination when they start school because of the regular access to the outdoor play facilities. Most children gain confidence in using climbing frames and learn to balance and move carefully. Despite equal access, boys tend to do better than girls in this, mainly because boys tend to gravitate to the outdoor activities. In terms of their development of skills involving accuracy and techniques of using equipment such as paintbrushes, pencils and crayons, all children achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Children's attitudes at nursery and their behaviour are **good**. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall, with provision for social and cultural development being **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are enthusiastic about the nursery.
- Children respond very well to adults.
- Children's social development is particularly good.

Commentary

6. Children are very happy at the nursery and their attendance is satisfactory. Procedures to record this and to follow up any absences are satisfactory. Children quickly settle into the routine, their parents staying with them until they gain confidence. Those who speak English as an additional language or who have special educational needs or other problems are warmly welcomed into their groups. All are well integrated. Within the caring and supportive nursery environment children quickly learn what is acceptable behaviour and the difference between right and wrong. Their moral development is good. Lunchtime arrangements, when children attending full-time sit at family tables, enhance and enrich the very good procedures for children's social development. These children respond very well to the encouragement of support staff to enjoy this sociable occasion. They develop good table manners and try hard not to speak when eating. Their social development is very good and the same as it was judged at the time of the last inspection.
7. Children's behaviour is good overall, and at times very good. Trusting adults to deal with any problems, children quickly develop very good relationships with others. Children choose their own activities from the wide and imaginative range provided for them, encouraged to try what they like but not forced to persevere. They develop confidence and become more independent as a result of adults' trust in them. Many play alongside rather than with others and the atmosphere is of a lively and friendly community. Some children take those with specific difficulties 'under their wing', and support for their peers is good. Outside, where children enjoy a wide range of equipment and activities, behaviour can sometimes slip, as boisterous children, predominantly boys, 'take over' the climbing frame or indulge in 'rough and tumble'. This limits the opportunities for the more timid.

8. Children’s spiritual development is good and their cultural development is very good, and circle time sessions are planned for later this term. Children watch with wonder as their flowers grow. They like preparing and tasting soup, made from parsnips grown in their garden. Whilst the guinea pigs enjoy a break from their cage, children talk excitedly about the feel of their fur. A multi-ethnic community, the nursery celebrates children’s cultural diversity very well. Aboriginal art, as well as art from European, African and other countries decorates the walls. Stories children enjoy include those about other lands and there are many books in dual language text. Parents assist by making pancakes and apple cake, for example, when Chinese New Year and Eid are celebrated.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **good** but assessment is **unsatisfactory**. The curriculum is **good**, with **good** provision for extending learning by using educational visits and visitors. The accommodation is **satisfactory**, with **good** levels of resources for learning. The school provides **good** levels of support and guidance for the children, and health and safety procedures are **good**. Links with parents and the community are **very good**, and the school has established **very good** links with secondary and special schools in the area and links with nearby primary schools are **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall. Assessment is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to provide pupils with wide range of exciting and stimulating learning activities in all areas of learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are taught well and staff do well to include all pupils in all that the school does.
- Weaknesses in assessment make it difficult for staff to monitor pupils’ progress

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	18	3	0	0	0

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

9. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and similar to the time of the last inspection. Very good attention is given to meeting the diverse need of children with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language. Very good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants results in children benefiting from a wide range of relevant and stimulating activities. Each part of the day, morning and afternoon, activities are carefully planned so that children are constantly learning. Careful support and interventions by staff ensure that children get the most from the tasks provided. The use of a theme, for example food, adds relevance to what children learn. Teachers and teaching assistants have very good relationships with children and create an ethos of care and support across the school.

10. Personal, social and emotional development is effectively taught. Teachers and support staff create a warm, friendly atmosphere in which children feel safe and secure. Children's individuality is valued and the approach adopted by staff encourages children to have the ability to make choices and to start to think and act on their own. The basic skills such as speaking and listening are effectively developed, for example, by sharing stories such as *Handa's Surprise* which prompted discussions about different types of fruit. Many opportunities are given for children to make marks and to start to recognise sounds as letters and many children develop a secure knowledge and understanding of the meaning of writing as a result.
11. Mathematical development is well taught and carefully planned. Practical activities are provided that develop an awareness of counting, measurement and relative dimensions and weights of common objects. A good example of this was seen when a group of children was observed talking with a skilled teaching assistants about the relative weights of different vegetables, using terms such as 'longer than' and 'heavier than'. Knowledge and understanding of the world is taught well. Children are inspired by a good range of well-planned activities. By using the computer to create simple designs and to sequence shapes and colours, children develop a good knowledge and understanding of how to use ICT to support learning. Investigating the way radishes and parsnips have grown in the garden and the fun of seeing how a magnet 'sticks' to metal objects develops children's knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas. Good use of the outdoor play area by teachers and teaching assistants, develops children's sense of space and good use is made of educational visits and real objects to develop their awareness of changes over time.
12. Creative development is effectively taught, with a particular strength in the way in which music is planned and taught. The children's imagination and natural creativity is promoted well and children are encouraged to have the confidence to express themselves through using paints, crayons and by participating in imaginative drama activities related to stories. Teachers make very good use of the outdoor environment. This not only develops children's learning overall, but also their physical development. Children develop confidence and improve their co-ordination as a result.
13. The teaching for children with special educational needs is good. Children needing support are identified at an early stage and activities are planned to meet their needs. Sensitive intervention makes sure that the children are included in all elements of learning. Effective strategies are also employed to meet the needs of children with English as an additional language. Good teamwork between two well-committed staff enables children to have specific support that successfully improves their knowledge and understanding of English. In addition, the needs of these children are recognised by teachers and teaching assistants and during general learning sessions, children who struggle with English are given well-targeted and sensitive additional support. There are effective assessment and record keeping systems being developed for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, although this has not yet been extended to all children.
14. Procedures for assessment and tracking are unsatisfactory overall. Even though staff know pupils well on a day-to-day basis and there is a rudimentary tracking system in place, the school lacks a secure way of measuring the achievement of individuals over time. This makes it difficult for staff to monitor progress and to establish the success of the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning over time. At the moment, teachers are not sure of how well children are doing and this makes it difficult for staff to plan as efficiently as possible and to guarantee that each child does as well as they can. The newly appointed headteacher has identified this is an area for improvement. She is in the process of considering various options to rectify the situation. A key aim of the school

is to develop better ways of targeting children and the school knows that an effective assessment system is vital to achieve this.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**, with **good** levels of enrichment. Accommodation is **satisfactory** and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is planned in the strong belief that children need to have free choice and this inspires learning and successfully builds children's confidence and self-esteem.
- Planning takes good account of the needs of individuals and makes sure that everyone, regardless of need, are included in all aspects of school life.
- Resources are good overall, with particularly good outdoor provision, but some aspects of the accommodation need improving.

Commentary

15. The curriculum is lively and stimulating. Many improvements have been made recently but the overall quality of provision is similar to the last inspection. It harnesses children's curiosity and successfully promotes very good levels of educational inclusion. The range of activities has improved since the last inspection, with a particular increase in the quality and use of the outdoor facilities. Children are encouraged to use the play areas outdoors as an outdoor classroom. There is a good balance between the activities that promote each area of learning recommended for nursery children and these are well organised so that children develop good levels of confidence and good levels of esteem. This is the benefit of following the philosophy that children of this age gain from being given a lot of choice. There is a risk, however, that some children do not participate fully or sufficiently in all activities.
16. Good provision is made for children with special educational needs. Good planning by teachers and teaching assistants makes sure that the curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of children with specific requirements. This makes sure that these children are fully involved in school life and never feel left out. The high percentage of children with English as an additional language are also given good support and the curriculum is carefully and thoughtfully adapted to reflect the richness and diversity of cultures and religions represented amongst children.
17. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of additional activities. Even though the headteacher has identified the need to extend the use of the local area and community to support learning, its use is still relatively good. Parents have visited school to share some of their religious customs, for example, the food eaten during the Muslim feast of Eid, and a governor has visited to share the Jewish celebration of Hannukah. Educational visits have been made to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world, for example by visiting local art galleries.
18. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and there is very good provision for outdoor learning. Most of the permanent buildings are old and in need of refurbishment. Despite very good use of available space in the way learning bases are organised, most rooms are cramped. Facilities for the administration and management of the school are unsatisfactory and the provision for staff is poor. Resources are good overall. Outdoor learning resources are very good and enhanced by the development of a school garden and some good climbing equipment. Despite current problems with some aspects of ICT,

for example, the unreliability of the internet connection, facilities for ICT are good and better than in similar schools.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for children's care, welfare and health and safety is **good**. The school provides **good** support, advice and guidance and has **good** procedures for seeking the views of children.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children feel cared for and secure because of the good arrangements for maintaining health and safety and the way staff value children's ideas and views.
- Induction procedures are very good and help children to make a good start to school life.

Commentary

19. Children's care, health and safety and welfare are very high priorities for the nursery. The site is secure and general security procedures are very good. Regular fire drills are held. Governors carry out risk assessments before their meetings, and the conscientious premises officer deals with any hazards or problems he has found on his daily round. Adults trained in first aid deal sensitively with the daily minor incidents, and practice of first aid is good. All teaching staff received training in child protection earlier this year and this is planned for governors and other members of staff later this term in order to comply with recently enacted legislation. As yet only one governor has been given this responsibility. Good levels of support are given to children with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
20. Most children have attended the Parent and Toddler group on site and consequently are familiar with nursery surroundings and settle happily into the daily routine. As a result of the very good relationships quickly developed between staff and children, they talk freely to adults about their wishes and disappointments and any problems are quickly sorted out. Nursery staff listen carefully to children's views and act upon them when appropriate. They value all contributions the children volunteer.

Partnership with parents, other school and the community

The school has **very good** links with parents and the local community. There are **very good** links with the local secondary and special schools and **satisfactory** links with primary schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents' support for the school is very strong and they benefit from very good levels of communication.
- The school is at the heart of the local community and children and parents benefit from the quality of its provision.
- Links with local primary schools are not as effective as they could be in ensuring the smoothest possible transition of children moving into compulsory education in reception.

Commentary

21. The nursery has maintained the very good links and relationships with parents reported at the time of the last inspection. Parents are delighted that their children can attend this popular school and appreciate everything that is done for them. Many attended themselves as children and value the nursery as part of the local community. They accept invitations to accompany children on outings with pleasure, translate documents for others and contribute £10 per annum for the school fund towards cooking ingredients, trips and care of pets. They are fully involved in nursery school life.
22. Communication with parents is very good. Although they receive only one written report on their children's achievements at the end of their time in the nursery, parents can and do speak to staff daily about their concerns and hear, with pride, of how and in what particular areas their children are making progress. Newsletters are well written and full of information, and parents are given a very useful booklet to help them and their children adapt to nursery life.
23. Parents of children already identified with special educational or other needs are fully involved in their child's education and well informed about their progress. The school supports parents who speak English as an additional language very well and ensures they understand how their children are progressing, what is happening at school and when special events will occur.
24. Nursery children enjoy the additional attention they receive from the eight secondary school students, visiting every week as part of the joint Teen and Toddler project. Kintore provided accommodation for a number of children from a special school. However, links with local primary schools are limited and mechanisms for children's transfer could be better. There are meetings between primary schools and the nursery but little evidence of joint planning to ease the transition of children into the reception classes. Inspectors agree with the headteacher that these links need improvement.
25. At the heart of the local community the nursery helps parents wherever possible. Through Sure Start, the parent and toddler group, staffed by the school's own nursery nurses, meets weekly in the hall and provides opportunities for toddlers to be adventurous in a controlled environment and for their parents to enjoy a coffee and some toast whilst supervising their children. Both parents and children explore books at the weekly Book Start Plus group on site. The Summer Fun Day provides enjoyment for all; adults and children were fascinated by the baby crocodiles this year and appreciated the antics of the clown. The premises officer works closely with local people, and generates some very good links with the wider community, which provides interesting resources, such as medals for children and marathon T-shirts for staff.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good** overall. The headteacher provides **good** leadership and **effective** management. The role of key staff is **satisfactory** with strengths in the management of special educational needs and English as an additional language. The impact of the governance of the school is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear educational vision for the school that is driving the school forward.

- The management expertise of key staff needs further development in order to ensure that there is a broad management base for the school.
- The governing body is effective in supporting the school whilst keeping an eye on the quality of educational provision.

Commentary

26. The new headteacher leads and manages the school well. She has a clear vision about the way that children learn and this is effectively communicated with all staff. There is a strong commitment to equality of opportunity for all children and the need to include everyone regardless of ability, gender or cultural background. From the lively and stimulating curriculum aimed at developing children's self esteem and confidence to the way in which learning bases are organised, the headteacher's influence is apparent. Many ideas are innovative and are the reason for the good provision throughout the school. There are effective procedures for selecting new staff and this is evident in the way that new staff settle in quickly. The headteacher has created a strong sense of teamwork amongst all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, and there is a shared vision for providing the highest possible standards.
27. All key staff have a defined role for managing aspects of the school's provision and their impact on the school's work is currently satisfactory. Until recently, there had been a lack of training and support for their leadership and management roles. The new headteacher is promoting a more collegiate approach to the way the school is developed and the profile of the deputy and senior staff is being raised so that there is a broader management structure. The management of special educational needs and the provision for English as an additional language are good and steadily getting better as a result of the high expectations set by the headteacher. The key areas of learning are effectively managed through the staff team in accordance with priorities established within the well-organised school improvement plan.
28. Although teachers and teaching assistants constantly monitor the effectiveness of their teaching on children's learning, there is a lack of a systematic way of assessing and recording children's progress over time. This, coupled with a need to develop a way of assessing children at the point of entry to school, means that it is difficult to effectively monitor progress over time in the school. The school is aware of this and is in the process of tackling this weakness. Procedures for performance management of all staff, including teaching assistants, are embedded in the school and make an effective contribution to identifying the professional needs of all staff, as well as linking in to school aims. The school has good induction procedures for new staff and is very supportive of newly qualified teachers.
29. The governing body is a knowledgeable and effective group that keeps the school focused through careful monitoring of its activities. Financial management is very good and, since taking over a delegated budget, a good strategic view has been adopted of the school's long term future. Governors are very involved in the future development of the school as a Children's Centre and planning is at an advanced stage. Through the strong and very effective leadership of the chair of governors, the governing body makes sure that the school gets the best from its budget.

Financial Information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	800 569
Total expenditure	737 931
Expenditure per pupil	4 855

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	92 871
Balance carried forward to the next	155 509

30. Day-to-day administration and financial management are of a good standard and add to the efficient running of the school. The school provides good value for money.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Personal, social and emotional development receives a strong focus in the teaching and children achieve well.
- Children develop very good levels of self-esteem, confidence and independence, and their behaviour is good.
- Adults show very good levels of care and concern for children's well-being and happiness, and relationships are very good.
- At times, some children are less willing to stay on task, concentrate and work together in a group.

Commentary

31. From below average standards on entry to the school, children achieve well and are on course to attain the expected goals when they leave nursery at the age of four. Although the new children have been in school for only two weeks, the good teaching and very supportive relationships have helped them to settle quickly into the routines of the nursery. They are developing good attitudes to learning and nearly all behave well because they enjoy the exciting activities provided and understand the impact that their actions can have on others.
32. All staff encourage the development of social skills in a variety of ways. For example, children learn the social conventions of eating lunch together and showing good manners, playing games and taking turns, and caring for the plants they grow. It was noticeable how carefully the children handled various plants in the garden and how proudly they showed visitors the size of their sunflowers. Personal independence is promoted very well and as a result most children attend to their own personal hygiene needs and put on their coats to go out to play.
33. Relationships are very good between children and adults and every opportunity is taken to reinforce fairness, respect and care for one another in this happy environment. Staff are very sensitive to the needs of every child and work particularly well with the parents of new children to help the children to quickly settle and feel valued. Children are considerate towards each other and are often seen spontaneously helping one another to put on aprons for painting or clothes for dressing up without prompts from adults.
34. As soon as children start in nursery, adults set up a wide range of activities for them and they choose what they would like to do. Children develop independence and initiative rapidly, along with the confidence to make choices, selecting resources and tidying up afterwards. Adults are very skilled at building up children's self-esteem. While children are constantly making decisions in selecting the activity they would like to do, adults do not always ensure that they settle and complete the task they have chosen. This means that some children move fairly quickly from one activity to another. Because there is free choice in selecting what they do, the good focused activities that are planned and led by

adults in small groups are not always as popular as other tasks. This results in the risk that some children miss out on some activities.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Despite the low level of attainment when children start school, they achieve well overall.
- Staff use imaginative approaches to improve children's skills of speaking and listening and to develop their vocabulary.
- Stories are used well to develop children's knowledge and understanding of books and recognition of sounds and letters.
- The diverse cultural and educational needs of children are effectively planned for.
- A lack of a consistent approach to assessing and tracking children's progress reduces the efficiency of teachers' planning and creates the risk of some children missing out at times.

Commentary

35. Many children start school with poor language skills. Around a half of the children in school at any one time live in homes where English is not the mother tongue and are in the early stages of learning English. Many of the other children starting school lack the confidence and skills to speak with others other than by using short comments and phrases. Because of good teaching and effective support by staff responsible for helping children with special educational needs and English as an additional language, all children achieve well in their time in the school. Despite the good progress made, only a minority of children reach the standards of language and literacy expected for their age by the time they complete their time in the nursery and move on to the next stage of their education. A weakness in the way children's attainment is assessed in relation to the expectations for their age makes it more difficult for the needs of all pupils to be systematically planned for, because objective evidence of achievement is not accessible.
36. A rich and stimulating range of well-prepared learning activities encourages children's awareness of English. Because many children have difficulties with speaking, teachers have devised a learning programme that emphasises the use of the spoken word. As part of regular outdoor play, staff work constantly with groups and individuals to develop the children's narrow vocabulary and extend their confidence to speak with others. In class based situations, children are encouraged to discuss the things that they do and to interact with other children. Children choose which activities to do and, whatever they choose, staff intervene sensitively in order to extend children's talking skills, to build their confidence and to share ideas and thoughts with others. As part of an activity involving role-play in a class café, children's imaginations took over and, when an adult visited, they practised and developed their knowledge of how to speak according to the situation. Children used 'please' and 'thank you' as part of their play and, with careful prompting by the adult, they developed their speaking so that they asked and answered questions in full sentences rather than one word answers and short phrases. An exciting initiative aimed at developing language through storytelling, engages and enthuses children. As part of a well-planned activity in which children used role-play skills to act out the story of *Three Billy Goats Gruff*, children showed pride and enthusiasm as their speaking skills were developed as a result of their imaginations being fired. Although pupils are able to listen fairly well at times, for example during story time, many have difficulties in

concentrating for more than a few minutes. The philosophy of expecting children to make their own choices in learning has many strengths, especially in enabling them to develop a love of learning, but achievement in listening to other children in more formal situations is reduced because of the emphasis on individuality.

37. Children are exposed to a wide range of stimulating activities to develop their awareness of text. Teaching and support staff make very good efforts raise children's awareness of the purpose of writing in many ways, for example by labelling familiar objects around the classroom and working alongside children to annotate children's work. They do this by using full sentences in order to reinforce good practice at an early age. Through focused discussions with groups of children and individuals, children learn to recognise the shape of the sounds that start their name and some higher-attaining children transfer this recognition to practising the writing of their letters and their own names. Whenever an opportunity for writing arises, staff cajole children to have a go at making marks. Chalkboards outside and pencils, felt pens and paper inside are always available to children. All children make good progress in making marks to represent what they feel are words and sounds. These emergent writing skills are greatly valued by staff and are very effectively developed for all children. The teachers value the children's efforts and even though the marks may not always fit in with the convention understood by adults, children know what they are trying to communicate. They are developing a good understanding of the meaning of writing as a way of communication. Imaginative use of resources catches children's interest. This was seen, for example, when children were given the chance to copy letter shapes in a shaving foam tray.
38. In addition to the rich range of activities that develop children's confidence to express themselves in 'writing', teaching and support staff successfully develop amongst the children the view that reading is fun. An awareness of books and the way they transmit ideas, thoughts and information is successfully developed. As part of regular large group reading sessions, children develop a love of storytelling. Teaching and support staff make good use of books to enrich learning. As part of work looking at the traditional story of the *Gingerbread Man*, children were totally engrossed in the events conveyed very well by the teaching assistant. They showed amusement and a sense of fear and tension as the events of the story unfolded and everyone joined in with great gusto when the chorus of the story was reached, "Run, run, as fast as you can; You'll never catch me, I am the Gingerbread Man!" Some good use is made of ICT to extend children's learning of language. The sequence of events in the children's story *The Hungry Caterpillar* were retold using simple drawings using the computer and turned into a strip cartoon.
39. The cultural diversity of children in the school is valued and celebrated as part of the school's language work. Stories from a wide range of cultures are integrated into lessons and bilingual books are available for use by parents and children. As part of a story session involving the book, *Handa's Surprise*, children explored the culture of an African child and learnt aspects of another culture and way of life. Good support for children with English as an additional language, involving effective interventions from skilled staff, makes sure that these children make good progress and achieve well. Good use is made of real resources, for example fruits from the above mentioned story, to give focus to group discussions.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical skills are taught well through a wide range of practical activities and very good resources.
- Generous adult support helps the children to achieve well.
- There is a strong emphasis on developing mathematics across all of the areas of learning and picking up incidental opportunities as they arise.
- Assessment is underdeveloped and not linked closely enough to planning.

Commentary

40. Children achieve well from below average standards on entry to the school and make good progress in their mathematical development. As a result most are on course to attain the expected goals for children of their age by the time they leave the nursery at the age of four. Teaching and learning are good and give an effective focus on helping children to develop their mathematical understanding. The very good resources and challenging 'outdoor classroom' impact very positively on children's achievement and ensure good levels of enjoyment in activities.
41. Throughout the day children have free choice and access to a wide range of interesting activities. Many adults are on hand to work with the children spontaneously and help them to practise and consolidate their mathematical skills and vocabulary across all areas of learning. Staff encourage the new children to develop their skills in number by counting how many hoops they throw in their skittle game outside. The children are already beginning to count up to five. Their measuring skills are extended when they compare the different weights of vegetables for making soup. They also have extensive experiences of sand and water play with very good resources.
42. Some older and higher-attaining children count numbers up to ten in the correct order when matching objects together on the computer or separating groups of animals in different ways and knowing that the total is still the same. Computer software is carefully selected so that children can consolidate what they have learned. Although children use shapes regularly for model making and construction, when they built a tower with different shapes, only a few could use the mathematical terms to describe the shapes, such as side or corner, but some recognised and named a square and triangle.
43. Those sessions led by the teacher are carried out in small groups. During one very successful session the children learnt how to sequence numbers forwards and backwards by singing and acting out a series of counting songs. Through very good teaching and well-chosen resources the children concentrated well and their learning was accelerated very successfully.
44. Some of the staff are new to the school and, because assessment is underdeveloped, they have a weaker view of the children's ability. Therefore, in their planning they are not always linking activities closely enough to the aspects of learning that the children find most difficult. The school has identified the need to introduce effective systems for assessment as soon as possible.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the school grounds to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Technology is well taught and children gain confidence in using computers.
- Good attention is given to valuing and celebrating the cultural diversity of the school community.
- A lack of an effective assessment system reduces the way staff monitor children's progress.

Commentary

45. Children achieve well and by the end of the nursery reach the standards expected for their age. They benefit from a wide range of learning activities made available each day. Good intervention by teaching and support staff engages children in learning about ideas linked to science, history, ICT, design and technology and cultural awareness. The good achievement is partly as a result of an exciting curriculum and partly because teaching and learning is good overall and at times very good.
46. Good use is made of themes such as 'Ourselves' and 'Food'. This approach improves children's learning because children can often identify with the activities they are given. The dominance of free choice for children has many strengths. For example, they learn to make decisions and can develop a sense of likes and dislikes, but the drawback is that there is a risk of children not always persevering with some experiences that are important for their development. There is a weakness in assessing and tracking children's achievement. There is a rudimentary record system in place that records which activities each child experiences but it is in the early stages of being implemented and lacks rigour. There is a risk that the current assessment and tracking system does not guarantee that each child gets a fair chance to experience activities that are important for their development in every aspect of this area of learning. This area of learning is well managed. Class bases have recently been reorganised and effectively create a stimulating and lively atmosphere for learning.
47. There is a strength in developing children's knowledge and understanding of nature and the outdoors. Children benefit from a thoughtfully planned range of vibrant learning activities and, by the time they leave school, achieve well in their knowledge of living things and nature. Good use is made of the school grounds as an outdoor classroom. This approach to using the environment is a conscious decision of the headteacher and staff. It is designed to supplement the experiences children have of space and nature in their everyday lives. Very good outdoor areas extend the indoor provision and make a very positive contribution to how well children achieve. Children thrive on being able to help the management of the school garden. Two boys were fascinated as they harvested radishes from their vegetable patch. The smell of the soil, the way the roots had hairs and the amazement that they 'couldn't be pushed back in' all served to inspire the children and provide a superb way of developing an early understanding of important scientific ideas; they also learnt the importance of personal hygiene as they were expected to wash their hands afterwards. The 'art' of cooking is skilfully used to develop children's awareness of how food is made from natural products. Some children worked enthusiastically with a teacher and assistant to prepare and make a delicious parsnip soup using vegetables grown by the school. Other children learnt about a wide variety of

fruits and their origins as they prepared a fruit salad, linked into a story about a girl living in an African village. A love of animals is developed by caring for the class guinea pig and sharing in the responsibility of looking after the class aquarium.

48. Technology is effectively planned for and well taught. Children achieve well in the use of the computer and reach standards that are above expectations. Computers are accessible and frequently used by children. The majority have a natural curiosity for the computer although at times some need support. This is effectively given by teaching assistants and often by older, more experienced children. Children develop a secure knowledge of how to use a mouse and develop an early awareness of the way that ICT is a useful tool for learning in variety of ways, for example, in developing their mathematical awareness of sequences or in recognising the initial sounds of their names and common words. Children develop a good knowledge of how to use the tools of the computer to create their own designs using colour and shape. Children also do well in developing their knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties. The construction activities are popular, especially with boys. Children use commercial play-kits to develop a good understanding of how to link pieces together in order to build vehicles that move and objects from their imagination. An example of this occurred was seen when a girl presented a simple plastic structure that she proudly described as “my mobile telephone holder”!
49. The children’s historical and geographical understanding and knowledge are satisfactory, but most children lack the necessary vocabulary to talk about their families, or to describe where they live. Some imaginative ideas are used to promote children’s awareness of time and changes. Through visiting a local antique market, children developed an awareness of how everyday household objects were different in the past. Whilst children develop a sense of place and the features of the geography of the school environment, the use of the local area to develop geographical awareness could be better. It is for this reason that the school has an aim of making more use of the local area to further enrich learning.
50. A strength of the school’s provision is the way in which it effectively develops amongst children very good levels of racial harmony. The wide variety of cultures and religious beliefs are seen as an important source for the school and the children’s heritage is valued and celebrated. By sharing the joy of children celebrating their cultural festivals such as Ramadan, Christmas, Hannukah and Diwali, children become aware of the richness and diversity of the society in which they live. Wherever possible, teachers use resources from a variety of cultural backgrounds to support learning. Traditional nursery rhymes and children’s stories feature in some work, whilst music and books from other cultures are often used as well. Occasionally, visitors from different ethnic groups come into school to work alongside children, for example, when making food for Diwali celebrations or sharing the artefacts that are used as part of the Jewish celebrations of Hannukah.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with a rich environment in which to be creative and achieve well.
- There is free access for the children to a wide variety of very good resources, which effectively supports their learning.

- Skilled teaching of skills and free choice activities are balanced well in art and craft sessions but more intervention is needed to make sure that boys take part in these activities.
- There are very good opportunities for children to make music.
- Assessment is weak in assisting staff in monitoring progress.

Commentary

51. In this area of learning the children achieve well from below average standards on entry to the school because the teaching and support they receive are good and they experience a wide range of stimulating activities. Most are on course to attain the expected goals for children of their age by the time they leave the nursery at the age of four. When they first start school, the children need a lot of help to learn important skills in art and craft and to develop their imaginations. Good use is made of small group sessions to teach a variety of skills such as mixing paints and using tools correctly for collage, printing and model making.
52. The good quality of teaching and learning result in children making good progress. This is effectively seen through comparing the new children's paintings of themselves, which are mostly a few marks with single colours with the older children's paintings, which show recognisable features and a good exploration of colours and shapes. Portraits of famous artists are readily available for the children to use as ideas and to widen their experiences and there are good opportunities to consider art and craft from other cultures when the children use the ideas of Aboriginal art to create their own patterns and prints. In free-choice activities, good intervention ensures that the learning is enhanced. During one session an adult helped a child to choose the most appropriate materials to make a model of a hippopotamus by discussing the shape and features of the animal first. While girls readily choose art and craft activities, there is a reluctance from some boys to either take part in these activities or to compete their tasks and more intervention is needed at times to encourage their participation.
53. Music is both a free-choice activity and adult-led session and is a daily feature in all classes. The children have free access to a good range of musical instruments and recorded music and they quickly build up a good repertoire of songs and rhymes. Although the new children are still at the early stages of learning how to play the instruments correctly and co-ordinating actions and words in their singing, the older children are very confident when performing and can usually keep to the beat of the music when adding an accompaniment or actions to their songs. They sing with enthusiasm, having learnt the repetitive parts of the song and show a keen sense of enjoyment in their music making.
54. There is a wealth of opportunities for spontaneous role-play, which becomes more meaningful when supported by an adult. Very good examples were seen of children's imaginative play being considerably heightened when they were supported to act out the story of *The Three Bears* and make a meal in the 'café'. Many children were seen in the home corners re-enacting activities they see at home, but their imaginative play is weaker without adult intervention and boys in particular don't usually stay long. As they do not have information from regular assessment to draw upon, teachers need to make extra efforts to match the tasks accurately to the needs of the pupils.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- After starting school with below average levels of co-ordination, children achieve well and reach standards that are in line with expectations for their age by the time they leave the school.
- Children benefit from very good resources outdoors but boys tend to dominate some of the outdoor equipment.
- A weakness in the assessment and tracking of individual children's achievement holds back the quality of planning.

Commentary

55. As a result of the good quality of teaching and learning and the very good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants, children achieve well in this area of learning. Many start school with limited co-ordination and movement but, as a result of good teaching and a very good range of outdoor activities, good progress occurs and by the time children leave school, they are working at the levels expected for their age. In terms of physical skills involved in outdoor activities, such as climbing, balancing and sliding, boys tend to do better than girls. In terms of skills that require more finesse, such as using a crayon or a paintbrush, girls tend to do better. These differences have many possible explanations, including different rates of physical development of boys and girls, but some elements of school organisation may also have their part to play.
56. Outdoors, the boys are generally livelier and more energetic. Inspection evidence shows that boys tend to dominate the use of the outdoor apparatus and girls are generally less assertive in gaining its use. This often results in girls tending to gravitate to 'softer' activities such as playing in the outdoor playhouse. Despite mostly good supervision and support for children outdoors from teaching and support staff, intervention to enable girls to have their turn is sufficiently managed not at times.
57. Activities for physical development indoors, for example, as part of drawing and painting, are well planned and made accessible for everyone. Children develop their skills of controlling tools carefully and accurately by having access to a variety of painting activities, model-making and construction activities. A good example was observed during the inspection where the children observed some fruits and used a pencil and crayon to create their own drawings. Children benefit from a well-planned range of stimulating activities. Opportunities to practise skills such as cutting or handling a paintbrush and pencil are made available. There is, however, a weakness in the way that children are assessed and their experiences tracked. This creates a risk that some children do not have sufficient time to do as well as they can in some important areas of learning because one or two pupils do not get fully engaged in their tasks or miss out on specific activities.

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
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
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	4
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).