

INSPECTION REPORT

RACHEL KEELING NURSERY SCHOOL

London

LEA area: London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Unique reference number: 100886

Headteacher: Ms Margaret Wayne

Lead inspector: Jane Lamb

Dates of inspection: 9 - 11 November 2004

Inspection number: 267533

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:	93 children (FTE 73.5)
School address:	Bullards Place Morpeth Street London
Postcode:	E2 0PS
Telephone number:	0208 980 5856
Fax number:	0208 980 8874
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Clare Barnett
Date of previous inspection:	23-25 February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Rachel Keeling Nursery School serves a community of great diversity which includes areas of significant deprivation. More than two thirds of the children have English as an additional language and most of those are at an early stage of learning English. Around three quarters of the children are of minority ethnic heritage, with the main community languages spoken being Bengali, Somali and Arabic. On entering the nursery, many children speak very little English; this has an impact on their understanding of other areas of learning which are often well below average also. The social and emotional development of many children is also below average on entry. The school admits children twice a year but about six per cent of children join or leave the nursery during the school year. The school has a mixture of part-time and full-time children. There is currently the full-time equivalent of 73.5 children on roll; 39 part-time and 54 full-time. There are 41 girls and 52 boys on roll. The school has a 'drop-in' parent and toddler group, and parents' coffee mornings each week. The school has identified 13 children as having special educational needs, including one statement of special educational need.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2153	Jane Lamb	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Communication, language and literacy Personal, social and emotional development Creative development
8990	David Tytler	Lay inspector	
21334	Savi Ramnath	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematical development Knowledge and understanding of the world Physical development

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Rachel Keeling Nursery School is a very effective school which meets the needs of its children particularly well. The school has very strong leadership and a staff team with very good experience and expertise, which results in very good achievement by children and high quality provision. The partnership with parents is particularly good also and this supports the very good teaching and the children's very good learning. By the end of reception, children are likely to meet or exceed the goals in all areas of learning except speaking due to the high numbers of children who have English as an additional language. The school gives good value for money from the budget it receives and the very positive outcomes of the provision.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership and management of the school are very good and there is a very strong staff team.
- Children, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, achieve particularly well.
- Teaching throughout the school is very good and children consequently learn very well.
- Children's attitudes, values and behaviour are very good and are underpinned by very good provision for their personal development.
- Excellent assessment of children's achievement is linked particularly well to children's individual needs and planning for their future learning and high quality support for children.
- Partnership with parents and the community are very good and enhance the particularly relevant, well matched and stimulating curriculum.

Since the last inspection, the school has made very good improvement in the issues identified last time and in teaching, learning and children's achievement. The planning for the curriculum, enrichment activities, assessment, care and support for children and the partnership with parents and the community are also much better. The school has appointed a very skilful home-school liaison worker which has also enhanced the provision significantly. There have been good improvements to the building including a parents' room and better access from the outside. There are also more staff who speak community languages.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Children's achievement is very good. Although most children start the nursery with very little English, and with often well below average attainment, they make fast progress in all areas of learning, so that by the end of the reception year, most are likely to attain standards higher than the goals for learning in their personal, social and emotional development, their numeracy skills and in creative development. In all other areas they are likely to meet the goals except in speaking, where some children will not meet the goals because they will not have had sufficient time to develop their vocabulary and grammar in English. Children with special educational needs achieve very well also, due to very consistent support and teaching, but some will not meet the learning goals by the end of reception. The children who have English as an additional language achieve very well and many will meet or exceed the goals by the end of reception except for speaking. The school is a warm, happy, harmonious and inclusive community and **children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** Children show great enthusiasm, are confident, work hard and behave well. They are very happy in school, get on well with adults and other children and show good care and respect for others and property. The systems to promote attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good.

Teaching by all staff is very good.

Staff have very good levels of understanding about how young children learn and work very closely together, sharing their expertise. They have high expectations also and the children respond very well to this in their very good learning. Staff plan a broad and balanced curriculum which is very well matched to the children's individual needs and offers interesting learning experiences which are very well planned. Particularly good support by all staff ensures that children who have English as an additional language make fast progress and gain confidence quickly. Parents are very closely involved with the staff in their children's learning and there are very good relationships between them and the school which support children at home as well as in school. This enhances the children's learning and achievement. There are also particularly good enrichment activities to extend children's learning. Children get on well with each other and adults in the school, and all adults and children show great care, courtesy and respect for each other. Children with special educational needs are very well supported, identified early and achieve very well. The assessment of children and the evaluation of activities is excellent and extremely well used to plan for future learning. The very different needs of the children are met particularly well and great respect is shown for the beliefs and customs of the families of the children. The staff members represent the different communities, speak most of the community languages and have high levels of commitment to the school. They work extremely hard to provide the children with relevant and stimulating work. Resources for learning are used well but some are beginning to show wear and tear from constant use. Provision for information and communication technology gives children good access to computers and programmable toys. The interesting and well planned outside area is used constantly and very well to promote learning in all areas of the curriculum. There are very good links with the local and wider community which extends children's understanding of their community and the outside world.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good.

The headteacher shows very good leadership of the educational provision and welfare of the children and senior staff contribute very well to this and have a very strong, shared, commitment to the school. The governing body support this well and have a good range of expertise which challenges the school to improve further. There is particularly strong, shared understanding of and sensitivity to the learning needs of very young children from diverse family backgrounds. There are very high expectations also and the day to day school management reflects this in its high levels of efficiency, coupled with good approachability. The bi-lingual staff and home-school liaison worker contribute greatly to this, assisting with access, translation and interpretation.

PARENTS' AND CHILDREN'S VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents are very happy with all areas of the provision for their children and show great respect and appreciation for the headteacher and staff and what the school is doing for their children. The relationships with parents are very good and there were no areas of significant concern or disagreement, only praise. The children enjoy coming to school and are very happy in their activities and enthusiastic in their learning.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

There are no significant areas of weakness for the school to improve. Minor improvements and refinements have already been identified in the School Improvement Plan and the Rolling Programme for improving the accommodation.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY CHILDREN

Standards achieved in areas of learning

By the end of reception, most children are likely to meet the goals for their ages in communication, language and literacy (except for speaking), mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. They are likely to exceed the goals in their personal, social and emotional development, creative development and number work in mathematics. This represents very good achievement by children, many of whom speak very little English and who are often well below average in their attainment when they start at the nursery. Children with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets set for them and their achievement is also very good. The children who have English as an additional language achieve very well also and attain in line with the other children, except for their speaking.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children's achievement is now very good in all areas of learning.
- Children who have English as an additional language make very rapid progress.
- Children are prepared particularly well for their next phase of education.

Commentary

1. By the time they leave reception, children are likely to meet and sometimes exceed the Early Learning Goals, which are the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception, in all areas except for speaking, for children at the early stage of learning English as an additional language. Children are achieving particularly well in all areas of learning because the school has very high expectations of the children and makes very good provision. This ensures that children make very good progress, learn very well and so achieve particularly effectively, often from well below average levels of attainment when they start school; this achievement has improved a great deal since the last inspection. Their early literacy and number skills are developed particularly well across a wide range of activities and they have good access to computers to develop their skills in information and communication technology (ICT).
2. The staff use the outdoor play area particularly well across many areas of learning, including physical development, language, creative and mathematical development and social learning. This area has been maintained well since the last inspection. During the inspection a very wide and rich variety of activities took place outdoors, including climbing, dancing, singing, painting, reading and writing. Children particularly enjoyed the music and dancing area, and frequently danced and moved to the current favourite 'Hootah's Song'.
3. Class teams meet every day to evaluate and assess what children have been doing and they make constant adjustments and improvements to the provision and teaching. Staff and curriculum leaders closely monitor and evaluate children's learning and if any particular barriers to learning are identified they become the focus of teaching; for example, children who are timid and shy in school are given particular help to socialise and work with others. The very good monitoring results in consistency of achievement and standards, through ensuring that children are assessed very thoroughly and are well supported and extended for their individual needs.

4. Children with English as an additional language are very consistently supported in all activities and many are also given dedicated time each week with very skilful support teachers and bi-lingual staff. This results in these children achieving particularly well in communication, language and literacy, generally meeting the goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year in listening, early reading and early writing skills. Their development in spoken English is slightly behind this, due to their lack of vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. This very good achievement is directly related to the strong leadership, staff training, skilful teaching and high expectations. This also ensures that achievement in other areas of learning, such as mathematical, physical and creative development, and knowledge and understanding of the world, is very good. Some children are helped to understand what they are learning, and are supported in their home languages by the bi-lingual staff, who work very effectively in mother tongues and English. Higher-attaining children achieve very well also, due to the very good curriculum planning which ensures that children are moved on at their own pace and the high quality enrichment activities which are provided by a particularly skilful staff.
5. Provision for children who have special educational needs is very good and they are very well supported. Those with statements and individual education plans receive the modified support which they need to progress well, and they are included fully and achieve very well. This is enhanced by skilful teaching, very good additional support from outside the school and daily team meetings held to discuss children's progress.
6. The school has made very good improvements in raising children's achievement since the last inspection, bearing in mind the wide range of children's home languages and specific special needs it caters for.

Children's attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Children have very positive attitudes to their work and are very well behaved in classes. Children's social and personal development are especially good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good also. Good arrangements are in place to promote attendance and punctuality. Attendance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a friendly, harmonious community, underpinned by the very good relationships throughout the school.
- Children respond very well to their teachers' particularly good behaviour management skills.
- Social development lies at the heart of all that the school does.
- Children understand what is expected of them and as a result generally behave very well.

Commentary

7. The children's social development is a priority of the school and is threaded through all areas of learning: it is particularly well supported at lunchtimes, which are sociable and enjoyable occasions. Teachers are patient and have high expectations of good behaviour, which they make clear. Children respond very well to this approach and, as a result, know what is expected of them. Behaviour which does not match the school's expectations is dealt with sensitively and positively. The mutual trust and respect between children and all adults in the school underpin the very good relationships throughout the school.
8. All adults in the school set very good examples to the children, and this is a key factor in the provision for children's very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The children generally listen to each other carefully and understand that their friends sometimes

have views and needs that are different from their own. Teachers encourage the children to think for themselves and explain their views. Children have a clear understanding of right and wrong, and are generally tolerant and respectful of each other. They treat the accommodation and resources well. They help very enthusiastically in clearing and tidying up after sessions, and in preparing rooms for lunch. They take great pride in their achievements.

9. The school ensures that all communities represented in Rachel Keeling are able to celebrate their own cultures and, as a result, children grow up in a harmonious and rich, multi-cultural learning environment. Some children listen to stories in their mother tongue, which they enjoy and appreciate, and there are staff who speak the main community languages. Also, children have many opportunities to sing and dance in small groups and to enjoy a good range of art activities, all of which help children to grow in confidence and self-esteem. Their work is admired and valued by the adults in the school.
10. Many of the children were very young and new to the school during the inspection, but are quickly settling into school routines, happily working together. Older children help them learn the consistently applied school routines. Children's attitudes to their work are generally very good and teachers are skilful in using children's natural enthusiasm to create a productive learning environment, where children can achieve very well. Overall, the pupils' very good personal development has been maintained since the last inspection.

Attendance

11. The local education authority does not require the school to keep annual attendance rates for nursery schools so it is not possible to make any judgements against previous years or local annual statistics. However, the school's own records show a considerable improvement in the first half of the autumn term as a result of its good arrangements for promoting attendance and punctuality. Parents are reminded frequently of the need for their children to attend school regularly and on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is particularly good. The main strengths are:

- very good inclusion for all children,
- the consistency of very good teaching by all staff and children's consequently very good learning,
- a rich and broad curriculum which provides very well for the needs of individuals,
- excellent assessment of children's achievement,
- very thorough and well structured planning of activities based on assessment information,
- a very attractive, lively and interesting outside learning environment, with an extensive range of opportunities,
- very skilful bi-lingual staff.

Teaching and learning

Teaching by all staff, children's learning and the planning of children's work are all very good. Assessment and its use to inform future learning are excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All staff have very good knowledge and expertise in the learning needs of very young children.
- Bi-lingual staff support children particularly well and ensure that they are included fully.
- Staff expectations and challenge of the children are very good.
- Very good provision for personal and social development underpins every activity.
- The planning, assessment and tracking of children's achievement are very closely linked.

Commentary

12. Teaching and learning are particularly good, with consistently good or very good teaching seen across each area of learning and by all members of staff. The areas of learning are taught across a wide range of activities both indoors and outside, and adults take

responsibility for different activities in the nursery. There is a rota for staff teaching in the different areas, ensuring that they gain a wide range of expertise and experience. The assessment and tracking of children's work is excellent and informs planning for future work very well; this area has shown very good improvement since the last inspection. Children's behaviour is managed very effectively, ensuring that children learn very well.

13. There are good systems for identifying the training needs of staff, and support is provided both from outside and within the school, which ensures consistency of practice. Staff put the child at the centre of its own learning and there is a very good balance between adult led and child selected activities. Children's experiences are closely tracked to ensure that they do not miss out on any areas. Consequently staff are very knowledgeable about the children. There is a wide range of expertise among the staff and a very good balance of experience with all staff making very effective contributions. Bi-lingual staff contribute particularly well to this and languages spoken by staff include Bengali, Sylheti, Somali, Spanish, French, Urdu, and basic Russian.
14. Because children are allowed to select their own activities for part of each session, staff constantly supervise what they are doing and where they are going. Occasionally, a child can wander for a short time, particularly in the cloakroom and wash areas which are separate from the main teaching areas and more difficult to supervise. This is generally well managed, although the occasional child will wander around looking at different areas before being engaged by staff to use their time in the nursery more productively. This needs to be supervised more consistently.
15. Children are taught in linked class areas, moving from activity to activity. There is high quality daily discussion by class teams about how and what individual children have learnt, which ensures that there is a clear understanding of what children need to learn next. Staff are very thorough in their planning and teaching of a wide range of stimulating activities, and resources, including ICT, are used well. The development of social and personal skills, mathematical skills and English language is a major focus of all teaching and leads to very good achievement in basic skills and good access to other areas of learning. Boys and girls learn equally well, and staff monitor gender differences in learning.
16. Parents are supported well in developing learning at home and are given very good information and advice. A book library and toy library support parents, and staff are always willing to help. Many displays incorporate home languages, and interpretation and translation are used very well to include parents in supporting their children's learning. The home-school liaison worker is very skilful at including parents in their children's learning and there are weekly coffee mornings to allow parents to meet each other, to get information and to offer their views. Parents are very appreciative of the opportunities they are given to be included in the provision for their children's learning.
17. Relationships within the school are very good and staff are skilful in developing children's confidence in trying new experiences, and in encouraging them to be proud of their achievements. Children respond well and learn with very good concentration, often showing extended perseverance and focus. This promotes high levels of achievement and thorough learning. They are confident and enjoy exploring new activities on their own; for example, when they paint, print and make models, or work alone on the computers. A strength is the staff's ability to allow children independence when appropriate. For example, a child very skilfully and carefully hammered nails into wood to make an aeroplane without any adult assistance. Because of the strong focus on personal and social development, they acquire basic learning skills quickly and are very happy in school, enjoying their work, learning to share, take turns and co-operate. Because teaching targets the needs of individual children, higher-attaining children are extended well. Enrichment activities are very well taught and assessed to extend learning. Children with special needs are very well provided for, and

learning support staff enable them to be included in all activities with great sensitivity. Individual education plans support their learning very well and enable them to make good progress towards their targets.

18. Planned activities are very well linked to the 'Stepping Stones' for learning, leading to the goals expected by the end of the reception year. Learning is organised very well. Children are allowed to choose, or are targeted for activities based on previous observations and assessment. There are constant focus activities led by staff for targeted children. These are planned in depth, and are often assessed. Each child's achievement is tracked well and records are kept which provide evidence from observations, samples of work and photographs to produce particularly good evidence of children's progress. These are used well to decide what children need to learn next and to set individual targets. The children are very proud of their achievements and most understand how well they are doing. Since the last inspection, this area has shown significant improvement in the consistency of the very good quality of teaching and learning, planning and assessment and the use of enrichment activities.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons (4 not graded for teaching)

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	15 (47 %)	16 (50 %)	0	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

The school provides a very good curriculum overall, with a wide range of opportunities to enrich what is taught. This is matched particularly well to the children's needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a wide range of stimulating experiences, including enrichment activities, and these help all children to achieve very well.
- The staff are knowledgeable about how young children learn and work closely as a team. This has a very positive impact on children's achievement.
- Children with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, are very well supported.
- Provision for children's personal development is very good.

Commentary

19. The school has improved its curriculum planning well since the last inspection. The curriculum is now very well planned and reflects the children's different starting points. For instance, it provides well for the needs of the younger children who recently started and is equally supportive of the older children. Teachers, nursery nurses and support staff plan a stimulating range of activities through practical activities. Although each area is planned separately, links are established with more than one learning area and the staff monitor how individual children use the different activities set up for them. As a result, all children, girls and boys, those who speak English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs, have a full experience of activities in all six areas of learning.
20. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development receives very good attention and provides a settled and positive start to school life. The routines within the nursery result in the very good level of responsibility that the children take for their own learning.

21. Opportunities for enrichment within the school day are very good. Staff organise good opportunities for children to explore the local environment and good use is made of visits and visitors. Enrichment activities, such as links with the Wigmore Hall, the Soanes Centre, the Museum of Childhood, the Tate Modern gallery, a local sports centre football coach and visits from the 'Bug Man' enhance the curriculum and make learning fun. Support for learning outside the school is very good. Activity sheets completed with parents for work at home are relevant and extend learning well. The help of parents and staff who speak community languages also supports enrichment as was seen when a nursery nurse told the children a story in Sylheti during the inspection.
22. Children who have special educational needs and those who are not yet fully fluent in English are very well supported. Their needs are assessed extremely well and the information gained is used very well to inform planning for their individual activities. Bi-lingual staff and very skilful support teaching are major factors in the high quality of this provision. Consequently, children's achievement is very good. Parents are consulted and informed about their children's progress at all stages and staff work very well in developing partnerships with the families. The curriculum offers a very supportive environment for children learning English as an additional language, giving them plenty of opportunities to pick up vocabulary in the natural setting of the various play and learning activities and nursery routines. There is very good support from outside the school for children with specific needs.
23. The very good match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum enables all areas of learning to be taught very well. The skilful support staff ensures that all children are included and participate fully in all aspects of the curriculum. Adults make effective use of time to provide the necessary support. They target children through group work and provide individual attention to promote conversation and learning alongside activities children initiate themselves.
24. The school has a very effective team of teachers, nursery nurses, bi-lingual speakers and support staff. All staff are very well trained and knowledgeable about how young children learn. They very competently evaluate planning, assess children's work and use these assessments for future planning. A class meeting takes place on most days, when teams review teaching and learning. This means that individual children are targeted to be monitored and assessed, and planning is modified as a result of this to ensure that all children receive appropriate experience in all areas of learning.
25. The accommodation indoors is rather small but is used well and organised very effectively into different areas of learning, and this contributes to the children's very good achievement. The outdoor area provides a large, very attractive and well-planned, safe area for children to play and explore, and contributes extremely well to learning. It is used constantly and imaginatively to extend learning in all areas of the curriculum.
26. One of the strengths of the provision is the range of very good enrichment activities which are planned particularly for older and middle-age-ranges of children. The school has employed a specific teacher to allow this to happen and this results in children being well extended in their learning and supports their very good achievement well.

Care, guidance and support

Children's care, welfare, health and safety are high priorities for the school and very good procedures are in place to ensure that children work in a safe and secure environment. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is excellent. Staff involve children very well in the life and work of the school by listening carefully to their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has particularly careful and effective procedures for ensuring a healthy and safe environment, and such arrangements have improved significantly since the last inspection.
- High quality individual profiles of each child's skills are built up.
- The particularly good support provided for children is based on excellent procedures for monitoring their needs.

- The trusting relationships and very good support from staff are important factors in the way the children progress.
- Very good and effective settling in arrangements give the children a particularly good start.
- Adults constantly talk with and listen to children, and value their views.

Commentary

27. The welfare and well being of the children are very strong and a high priority of the school's leadership and provision. This has a major impact on children's effective learning and overall development. Comprehensive systems are in place to guarantee that issues of general safety and wellbeing are met. All staff are aware of the first aid procedures and there are some trained first aiders also. There are very effective procedures for informing parents of any accident and any treatment given. Lunchtime staff are well briefed and are provided with all the necessary information about children's dietary and medical needs. They pay close attention to children's needs while encouraging them to become increasingly independent in eating and clearing away their plates. Effective child protection procedures are in place and staff are well informed on relevant information. There is very good liaison with other agencies that support individual children.
28. The staff are skilled at listening, observing and assessing what children do and where they need support to do better. They generate a large amount of useful assessment material over the course of the year and much of this finds its way into the comprehensive profiles compiled for each child. These are detailed and provide the reader with a clear view of the child's interest and achievements. Parents have completely open access to information about their child's progress. The personal development of children is closely monitored through discussion. Staff know the children and their families particularly well. It is clear from the second that the doors open just how well staff know the children in their care and are, therefore, able to provide excellent support and guidance. Underpinning the school's approach is the development of trusting relationships with the children. The secret of their success lies in the constant verbal interaction that takes place. Adults chat, question, and above all listen to what the children tell them. As a result, they know all about the children's likes and dislikes and alter what happens in the nursery to fit in with these interests. For their part, children know that their opinions are valued and listened to. They are eager to talk to adults because they know they will receive a positive response.
29. The nursery has established a very good induction programme for new children. This allows children to settle quickly and feel secure in their new surroundings. Parents value this and speak highly of the one-to-one support offered to their children. Similarly, children are prepared well for transfer to primary school. Children who start at times other than the specific times are quickly integrated.
30. Children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are very well cared for. All are carefully assessed and observed to monitor the progress, and to ensure that they are achieving as well as possible.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership between the school and parents is very good, as are the links with the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents value all aspects of the school's work and most are fully involved in the life and work of the school.

- The quality of the information they receive about the school and their children's progress is especially good.
- Children's experiences are widened through useful contacts with the community and other schools.

Commentary

31. Parents are very supportive of the school and value particularly the quality of education and care provided for their children. Parents raised no significant concerns either in the pre-inspection survey, completed by a good number of parents or the well-attended parents' meetings. The school goes out of its way to ensure a regular stream of information to parents and provides many chances for them to talk to staff formally and informally, translating and interpreting when appropriate. Most parents are now fully involved with the school as partners in the education of their children. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection.
32. Parents value particularly their easy access to the headteacher and all adults in the school, who listen to them carefully and address their concerns. The recent appointment of a very skilful home-school liaison worker is already having a very positive impact on improving relationships with parents even further. Weekly coffee mornings for parents are also attended by parent governors and are proving to be a useful means of discovering parents' needs and ideas. Individual concerns are addressed either in school or through home visits.
33. The school is keen to involve parents as active partners in the education of their children at home and in school. The quality of information provided to parents on how their children are getting on is especially good. Parents are invited to group and individual meetings before the children start at the nursery, when the school explains its approach to the teaching and learning of their children. Individual meetings to talk about progress are held within the first term and mid-way through the child's time in the nursery and again before the children leave. There is also very good support given for parents to help their children at home with activity sheets. A toy lending library and toddler play group also contribute very well to this support for parents.
34. Parents are shown the regular assessments and profiles of their children's progress, meet staff to discuss what is being done to help their children achieve well and review the targets for improvement. When children leave, parents receive a copy of all their child's records together with a photographic record of their child's time in the school. The well-written, attractive and informative prospectus and governors' annual report provide all the necessary information.
35. Very good links with the community are well used to enhance the curriculum. Children visit the local area regularly, often in small groups and go further afield to art galleries and museums. Children's experience is also widened by a range of visitors to the school. The very good links with the local education authority focus on providing a high quality education. An equally strong partnership has been developed with local primary schools, which ensures also a smooth transfer to the next stage of education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher provides very good leadership, supported by senior staff, which underpins the very effective management of the school. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's leadership underpins the school's drive to raise children's achievement and support personal development.
- She has the strong support of the deputy headteacher, all other staff and governors, who all share her clear vision for the school.
- The particularly good school improvement plan identifies clear priorities to enable the school to prepare securely for the future.

- Teaching and learning have improved significantly as a result of rigorous and regular monitoring.
- Governors play an important role in planning for the school's future.

Commentary

36. The strong and committed leadership of the headteacher is focused on ensuring a high quality of education for all the school's children, very good inclusion and seeking continual improvement. The school is managed very well, in part because of the very good teamwork and mutual support of all staff in the school.
37. The senior management team of the headteacher, deputy head and two full-time teachers, each with clearly defined responsibilities, supports the headteacher very well. The school's arrangements for self-evaluation are very good, and the judgements are realistic and used to make further improvements to the school. The headteacher and her team ensure that any emerging issues are tackled effectively. Overall, the leadership and management of the school have improved well since the last inspection.
38. The monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom, mainly by the headteacher and her deputy head, has resulted in a significant improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. Whilst not all areas of the curriculum have individual co-ordinators, staff teams and the headteacher and senior managers keep a very good oversight of the curriculum and take appropriate action, monitoring and evaluating the provision rigorously.
39. The school has very effective arrangements to ensure racial equality and the inclusion of all children in everything that the school offers, building on what they already know and can do. This is particularly true of provision for children with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and higher attainers. Very good arrangements for the professional development of staff are linked securely to the very strong procedures for performance management designed to improve the quality of education provided.
40. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. It is very supportive of the school and is actively involved in planning its future. There is a good range of expertise amongst the governors, who are confident to make constructive suggestions and prepared to ask challenging questions where necessary. The governors meet all statutory requirements.
41. Provision for special educational needs is very well managed by the special needs co-ordinator, which ensures that all aspects are well organised. The provision for pupils speaking English as an additional language is equally well led and managed, ensuring that these pupils are very well catered for. The school's enrichment programme provides very useful extension activities for many children, including high attainers.
42. The headteacher and the governors ensure that resources available to the school are used to meet educational priorities. For example, they have appointed a teacher with a specific role in allowing enrichment activities to take place, a community liaison worker and many staff who speak community languages. In the four years since it took responsibility for its own budget, the school has built up a large balance to support improvements to the building and accommodation, some of which have been undertaken already. A rolling programme of maintenance has been put into place which should help to address the lack of a separate interviewing room, the cramped staff room and some areas that require redecoration, such as the children's WCs. Money will also be used to update resources and develop the garden further. The school ensures that it provides good value for money through careful spending and evaluating the effectiveness of spending decisions.

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

What is the effectiveness of the provision for and standards achieved by minority ethnic children and children with English as an additional language?

43. The findings in this area are incorporated in to all areas of the report.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

There has been very good improvement since the last inspection in curriculum planning and the assessment of children's work, and its use in matching future work to the learning needs of each child, which is now excellent. There has also been good improvement in teaching and learning, and in the monitoring of standards of work and children's achievement. Very good team work and strong curriculum expertise are key factors in this improvement, which has had a significant impact on the well-above-average achievement of the children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's achievement is very good because consistently very good teaching ensures that they are given independence and are encouraged and supported particularly well.
- Children's confidence and self-esteem are very well promoted and they are starting to take responsibility for their own learning at an early age.
- The children generally are likely to exceed the goals expected for their age by the end of the reception year, even though standards were often well below average when they started nursery.
- Provision for this area is an integral part of every aspect of the curriculum.

Commentary

44. Most children are in line to exceed the goals expected in all areas of their personal, social and emotional development by the time they leave reception. This very good achievement by them is directly linked to the very good provision and consistently strong teaching and learning. This quality has been maintained well since the last inspection. The school sees the children as the central pivot in their own learning. This means that children's individual needs and aptitudes provide the focus for planning a highly individualised curriculum in personal, social and emotional development, ensuring that all children are encouraged and supported to gain confidence and independence. As a result, they develop very good personal qualities and learning attitudes and show very good confidence for their ages. The well planned learning environment provides interest and stimulation to encourage children's motivation and co-operation. Many children are very chatty and confident when approaching new experiences and in using their emerging skills in English.
45. The ethos for learning is co-operative, settled and happy, with children able to maintain attention and concentration for long periods when they are interested. This is also very supportive of children with special educational needs. Staff encourage children with special educational needs and those who are reticent or shy to work with others, join activities and communicate their needs. Consequently, children are generally good at sharing, co-operating and taking turns. For example, in a climbing activity outside, children waited their turn at the climbing frame and respected the need for space by other children. This was particularly well encouraged by the teacher working with the group of children. Children develop very good social skills from working alongside other children and are learning to behave respectfully by the good role models of older children and staff.
46. At the beginning of sessions, children take off their own coats, find their name cards and register themselves by putting their cards in a wall pocket in each class. In this way, they learn to be independent and responsible, and are also very confident in reading their own and other's names. Children are able to work calmly and busily on their own for extended periods

at a wide range of self-initiated activities and on the computers. When working alone, they generally co-operate well, concentrate on their activities and take turns with others. This was seen when a group of children worked for over half an hour together on their own, 'writing' letters, 'addressing' envelopes and 'posting' their letters in the class post box. Children's behaviour is managed very well by all adults who encourage independence and responsibility, but when necessary direct the children firmly but gently, supporting their self-esteem. The school has a strong atmosphere of friendliness and acceptance of others' differences and all are treated with courtesy and respect; staff are very good role models for developing these qualities in the children.

47. Lunchtime is a particularly relaxed and friendly time with children chatting, sharing and eating happily together. They use cutlery well for their ages, pour out their own water and can scrape their own plates and put the dirty ones in the right pile. They are given excellent support by the staff who sit with them, help them and chat to them in a friendly way. This constantly reinforces polite behaviour and respect, and develops children's language skills well also. The school emphasises the learning of social skills, such as saying 'Please' and 'Thank you' and saying 'Good morning' or 'Hello' to the headteacher and staff on the door when they arrive with their parents. The strong provision in this area is part of every activity undertaken and is planned and assessed with great care.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children who have English as an additional language are supported particularly well.
- Teaching and learning are very good and this leads to very good achievement by all the children.
- The curriculum is planned and assessed particularly well.
- All opportunities to extend children's language are taken across a wide range of activities.
- Bi-lingual staff are used particularly well to ensure that all children are included and have full access to the curriculum.

Commentary

48. By the time they leave reception, children are likely to reach and sometimes exceed the goals for learning expected in their listening, early reading and writing. Because of the high percentage of children with English as an additional language, they are not all likely to reach the goals in speaking. This is because many children will not have developed enough English vocabulary and grammar by the end of reception to reach the goals. First language English speakers, however, will generally reach or exceed the goals in speaking. This shows very good achievement for all children, many of whom speak very little English when they start nursery. Children with special educational needs also achieve very well but some are unlikely to reach the goals by the end of reception. Higher attaining children are very well extended in their learning and do very well in the nursery, because of the very good enrichment activities and because the approach to teaching is very individual.
49. The very good learning, children's rapid progress with English and very good achievement is a result of the particularly thorough and consistent teaching, and excellent assessment and tracking. English as an additional language is particularly well taught due to high levels of staff expertise and the good proportion of staff who speak the main community languages. Because the assessment, observation and recording of children's achievement are particularly thorough, they provide excellent information as the basis for planning the children's next activities with a very precise evaluation of each session. For example, during the daily team meetings to discuss children's progress, daily activities are discussed by the whole class team,

so that the strategies identified ensure consistency of approach in supporting individual children. Staff also have a very high level of commitment to inclusion and equality of entitlement.

50. The very good teaching and learning are marked by consistency, the very good language diversity of the staff, high expectations and detailed understanding of the learning needs of very young children. The very thorough and appropriate range of activities, across all areas, optimise the opportunities for learning. There are, for example, many opportunities for children to develop their early writing skills and share books with adults, resulting in very good understanding and pleasure in the written word and its meaning. A good example was a support teacher working very effectively with children, including some early stage English learners, on a construction activity. She very effectively used information books about building and promoted a dialogue with children which extended their vocabulary, encouraged conversation and showed children how books can give information. Time is also used very well, with language learning being planned and apparent in all activities, both outside and inside the classroom. Children with special educational needs are very well included in such activities and play a full and active part in the games and in answering questions. All staff share a very high commitment to inclusion for all children and there is full access to the language curriculum, which is modified very well to meet children's needs. The work seen in displays and current work showed some interesting examples of children's writing related to all kinds of stimuli.
51. The nursery is a good environment for literacy, with translation and community languages being an important part of much displayed work and the notices for children and parents. This allows children to appreciate the meaning of text and associate language with pleasure and communication. The children are very interested in books and stories, and are developing early reading skills very well because staff extend their language skills; for example, when reading a story or learning a rhyme. Children take books home to share with their parents and there is a good range of dual-language books. Very useful discussion with parents provide them with very good information, and the weekly coffee mornings with parents also make a significant contribution to the children's very good achievement. Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement, with better teaching and learning, and much better assessment. There is also very good improvement in the appointment of staff who speak the main community languages and the home-school liaison worker who promotes parents' interest and partnership. The deputy headteacher, who leads this area, is a very skilled practitioner with very high levels of expertise and a clear overview of her areas of responsibility, which also includes the particularly effective provision for children who have English as an additional language.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and the careful checking of progress enable children to achieve very well.
- There is a very good range of practical activities.
- Children have a very good understanding of number.
- Staff used daily routines well to encourage children to count and to use mathematical vocabulary.
- Mathematical development permeates across all areas of learning.

Commentary

52. The attainment of many children at the start of the nursery in this area is well below average. The very good teaching, rich curriculum opportunities on offer and good links with other

subjects mean that children are often practising and consolidating their numeracy skills. As a result, children achieve very well. Their attainment, by the time they leave the reception class, is likely to meet the goals expected, and their understanding of early number is likely to exceed the goals. Children who are not yet fully fluent in English do very well as they are supported through a rich variety of practical activities and through very good emphasis on teaching vocabulary skills and modelling language. Children who have special educational needs are fully integrated and very well supported, and they achieve very well towards their set targets.

53. Staff match work to children's needs very well and have high expectations of their learning. As a result, most children can count to 10 and some older children and higher attainers can count to 20. Most children know the value of numbers up to 5 and can accurately match numbers to objects. Many understand 'more' and 'less' and know that 'one more' than 14 is 15. All staff take every opportunity to count with the children and routine activities are well used in helping children to understand how the number system works. For example, staff involve children in counting how many plates are needed for lunch and how many children will need knives and forks. These practical applications of their skills help them to understand how mathematics is useful in everyday life. Children become familiar with numbers through songs, counting rhymes such as 'What's the time Mr Wolf?' and computer games which all stimulate children's enjoyment in learning to count and match, to add and takeaway. Good use is made of the outdoor area in developing children's mathematical skills. They count the number of paces to the climbing frame and reinforce their knowledge and understanding of shapes when using large, colourful solid shapes.
54. Through a wide range of practical, well-organised activities children develop a good understanding of shape, space and measures. Most are able to recognise simple flat shapes and accurately identify identical shapes in pictures. Children developed their mathematical, personal and social skills as they confidently went round the nursery with clipboards to collect information on a tally chart about those who are 'happy' or 'not happy'. Almost everyone was happy. With well-measured support, their findings are then interpreted in the small groups.
55. Teaching and learning are very good. Staff are very successful at matching the tasks to the learning needs of individual children. They give good thought to the sort of activities they provide for children and model mathematical language such as 'more', 'less', 'bigger' and 'smaller' well. They ask questions, such as '*How many is one more than...?*' to encourage children to order their thoughts and in order to check their progress. In small-group sessions, adults provided very good levels of support for lower-attaining or very young children, which enabled them to join in with activities and make good progress. Staff regularly note down evidence of children's developing mathematical understanding and skills and share this information in daily class meetings to help their future planning. This area has been maintained well since the last inspection.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff plan interesting activities for the children that make very good use of the school grounds, visits and visitors.
- Good use is made of assessment to plan for future learning.
- There are lots of practical activities that encourage children's observational and investigative skills.

Commentary

56. When children start in the nursery, a small number have a good basic general knowledge but the majority have very limited experience and understanding of the world around them. Because the quality of teaching and learning is very good and children achieve very well, standards by the end of the reception year are likely to meet the goals expected. Children are able to extend their early ICT, scientific, historical and geographical knowledge very well from when they start at the nursery.
57. Children's learning benefits greatly from the effective way staff plan practical activities, which cover many areas of learning. They learn to explore and observe well the textures of different materials. They notice that when a different amount of water is added to cornflour or soap flakes the texture changes and becomes 'sticky', 'slimy' or runny'. Earlier work and past planning show, for example, that many children are beginning to understand the needs of living things when planting sunflower seeds and investigating snails. Children extend their early scientific knowledge when pushing and pulling toys, and many know that some materials are magnetic and others are not.
58. Children learn about the local environment through walks and visits out. They are beginning to develop their early geographical vocabulary in the course of following directions, making routes in the outside play area and through simple maps which identify the different parts of the school. Staff teach well the basic skills for using computers. Therefore, many children have good control of the mouse when they move objects on the screen and match words and pictures.
59. Children extend their knowledge of the customs and cultures of other people. Many understand that 'Eid' is an important celebration for Muslims and that their special place of worship is called a mosque. In all classes, children use construction equipment well to make recognisable models and have good opportunities to practise skills in cutting and joining materials as seen when attaching lids to their boxes.
60. Teaching and learning are very good. Staff are very successful at making activities interesting and challenging. They provide numerous opportunities for children to learn through adult-guided activities and also for children to talk about their work. Evaluations are made at the end of sessions and inform the next steps in learning. Staff develop spoken communication well for all groups, including those children at the early stages of learning English.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The development of children's skills is very good in the use of small equipment such as brushes, pencils and scissors.
- Very good planning and preparation ensures that maximum use is made of the outdoor area.
- Adult intervention enhances learning.
- The outside area is particularly well planned and used to provide stimulating large play.

Commentary

61. All children achieve very well in physical development. One of the reasons for this is that the teaching and learning are very good. Staff plan carefully a wide range of imaginatively organised activities that extend children's physical development and also their learning across

the whole curriculum. Consequently, children are set to meet the goals expected by the end of the reception year.

62. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the outdoor area and equipment, and children's learning benefits considerably from this. Staff make very effective use of the well-planned outdoor activities as an integral part of teaching, with outdoor play complementing and extending the activities indoors.
63. In most of the indoor activities, children learn how to develop control over a wide range of tools and materials. They show increasing control as they explore malleable materials by patting, rolling and twisting when investigating how they feel. They show good developing hand to eye co-ordination when they pour water, and learn and practise how to use different size paint brushes, pencils, scissors and jigsaw puzzles. Work in the sand and water helps them to link together different movements, while building with blocks emphasises linked movements and control.
64. The school places great emphasis on children being able to make choices and develop their learning from vigorous large play experiences. Children extend their control and balance when manoeuvring wheeled vehicles and show a good recognition of size when avoiding bumping at the bends. They learn to balance on low and high climbing equipment as they develop control and co-ordination, and they confidently use a range of body parts to travel along, under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment.
65. Teaching and learning are very good. Staff provide very good support to ensure children are safe and develop their skills. They provide thoughtful support and supervision to help children to play together constructively, and use praise very well to encourage less confident or less active children to learn new physical skills. They monitor, assess and record children's progress extremely well. At the end of the day, staff attend very effective class meetings to review children's participation and progress in activities, and to identify their next stages of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Music is a great strength of the provision with particularly broad and well planned opportunities for children to participate.
- Standards are likely to exceed the goals by the end of reception and children achieve very well.
- Assessment is excellent and used very well to support future learning.

Commentary

66. The school has identified creative development as a focus for improvement in the development plan, with music provision having been revised already. The school presents the children with a very broad and interesting range of creative opportunities, characterised by very good outdoor and indoor activities, supportive staff and thorough and thoughtful planning and preparation. The nursery staff appreciate the importance of creativity in developing children's wider learning in literacy and mathematics, and in their physical, social and emotional development. They are also very aware of the importance of fun and enjoyment in learning. This area is led by a group of teachers who contribute significantly to creativity across the whole curriculum and who support other members of the staff. Assessment is detailed and used very well to provide for the next stage of each child's learning.

67. Children are likely to exceed the goals in this area by the end of reception in their music skills, painting, drawing and making skills and in their dance and movement skills. This represents very good achievement and learning, due to consistently very good teaching by all staff. This is true of higher-attaining children, those with special educational needs and the large number of children who have English as an additional language. The school gives high priority to this area of learning and the provision of the imaginative curriculum is well thought out. This represents good improvement since the last inspection in better teaching and learning, and higher achievement and standards of work. A great deal of high quality work in creative development was displayed, including a sunflower display with beautiful observational drawings and paintings, and collages and prints.

68. Children are confident and sensible in working independently, such as when making collages, using glue sticks and scissors, and selecting materials. A great strength is the confidence of the staff in allowing the children the time and opportunity to experiment and to use their own imagination and skill in making and doing things. This was seen well in an activity where children mixed their own cornflour in trays, coloured it with vegetable dyes and enjoyed feeling the texture and consistency, describing what it felt like as they experimented. A very experienced and confident teacher supported this, allowing children time and opportunity to learn and experiment. This area contributes greatly to the children's confidence and high self-esteem as well as their creative development. Staff constantly encourage the children to learn new vocabulary, and to comment on and discuss their work with others. Because of these consistent strengths, teaching and learning are very good by all staff, leading to the very good achievement shown by the children and the good standards of work.
69. Staff have very high expectations, plan rigorously and use very precise evaluation and assessment. Therefore, activities are matched well to the children's learning needs and interests. During the inspection, a wide range of activities was seen including dance outside, music, outdoor play, making and painting, ICT, and role play. One very good example of the integration of creative learning was a music lesson, where awareness of the range of voice uses, music appreciation, singing and rhythm work were extremely well developed. The standards of children's performance and listening skills were higher than would be expected and many already met the goals for the end of reception. The children are also able to select their own music outside, operate the tape player, dance and sing in a very lively way and change the choice of music. Great favourites are 'Superman!' and 'Hootah's Song', which the children enjoyed particularly well. The dance observed was very rhythmic and skilled, with great pleasure and confidence being shown in the spontaneous activity.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	1
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	1
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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