

INSPECTION REPORT

STONEHILL NURSERY SCHOOL

Derby

LEA area: City of Derby

Unique reference number: 112476

Acting Headteacher: Mrs P Geary

Lead inspector: Mr Sean O'Toole

Dates of inspection: 24th – 25th January 2005

Inspection number: 267997

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

© Crown copyright 2005

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery
School category: Maintained
Age range of pupils: 3 – 4 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 75

School address: Stonehill Road
Derby
Derbyshire
Postcode: DE23 6TJ

Telephone number: 01332 341636
Fax number: 01332 341636

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of Ms Sarah Grawe
governors:

Date of previous 12th July 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Stonehill Nursery is located in Derby and draws its children from the locality. Children come from a mixture of home backgrounds but generally the area is one of socio-economic deprivation. Currently, the 75 children on roll (37 boys and 38 girls) attend part-time each day, either in the morning or afternoon; two of the children are full time. Children start school after their third birthday. The levels of attainment on entry to school are well below those expected for children of this age. Ten of the children have special educational needs. The school admits children from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, and 50 are at an early stage of learning English. Most pupils have a Pakistani heritage and their main languages are Mirpuri and Panjabi; smaller proportions speak Urdu and Bengali. The school received an Achievement Award in 2002. The school was given a delegated budget from April 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20891	Sean O'Toole	Lead inspector	English as an additional language; Community provision.
14178	Patricia Willman	Lay inspector	
29989	Pauline Goodsell	Team inspector	Foundation stage curriculum; Special educational needs.

The inspection contractor was :

Inspire Educational Ltd

The Coach House
132 Whitaker Road
Derby

DE23 6AP

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	13
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING	15
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	21

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This is a good school which provides an inclusive education. The children achieve well in most of the areas of learning. The acting headteacher leads and manages the school effectively. The quality of teaching is good, helping the children to learn effectively. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children make good progress in almost all aspects of their learning, especially in their personal, social and emotional development
- Children at an early stage of learning English make good gains in their learning
- The headteacher leads with clarity and vision and is supported wholeheartedly by the staff
- Teaching, learning and assessment are mostly good
- Progress in mathematical development is slower than in other areas of learning
- Children of all abilities and backgrounds are well cared for and supported effectively
- Planning for sessions is not linked closely enough to learning objectives and some opportunities to promote speaking are missed
- The school's strategic plans need a sharper focus

The school was last inspected in July 1999 and has made good improvement in recent months under the strong leadership of the acting headteacher. Planning has been improved and children's progress is checked regularly. The school's development plan identifies the main priorities but still needs a sharper edge in measuring success. Good teaching has been maintained. Leadership and management now have a good grip on monitoring and evaluating the school's performance, although the role of governors is not fully developed. The school is well placed to build upon its recent improvements.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall **achievement is good** with boys and girls being almost equally successful, although girls are slightly more proficient than boys in some aspects of communication, language and literacy. On starting school almost all of the children are working at a level which is well below that expected for their age. Most have little or no English and their skills in mathematics are especially weak. By the time they leave the nursery, few children attain the expected goals for their age in most areas of learning. Their personal, social and emotional, creative and physical development are about average. Standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world are below those expected. The children make most improvement and achieve best where their performance is not as dependent on communication and language skills. Progress is satisfactory in mathematical development and good in all other areas of learning because of the quality of teaching and the curriculum provided. The few more able children do well and some are working at levels which are in advance of those expected.

The school identifies and supports children with specific learning difficulties effectively and they make good progress. Children at an early stage of learning English make good progress because of effective bi-lingual teaching. There is no substantial difference in the performance of different groups but children from a Mirpuri heritage, who have limited English, struggle with some aspects of learning, especially mathematics. The headteacher has clearly identified targets for improvement and uses data well to compare the children's performance with those in other schools.

The school makes **good provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** drawing on the children's home backgrounds to make learning relevant. This approach contributes to the children's enthusiasm for school and enhances their awareness of the cultural diversity found in the area. Staff consistently reinforce positive values and encourage the children to behave well. Relationships between staff and children are very good. Older children enjoy the responsibility of looking after new entrants and they act as good role models. There remain some problems with punctuality as many parents drop off older siblings at local primary schools before coming to the nursery. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school's **effective programme of teaching and learning** contributes much to the **good quality of education** provided. Staff monitor the children's progress well making sound use of assessment to measure learning and to plan the next steps in learning. Almost all aspects of the areas of learning are taught well. Staff are clear about their responsibilities. They focus strongly on raising the children's confidence and in teaching basic communication skills. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is good. Mathematical development is taught satisfactorily but more focus is needed on developing and practising skills and mathematical vocabulary. Staff intervene skilfully to support children at an early stage of learning English and bi-lingual assistants play a pivotal role in boosting these children's levels of competence. Children with special educational needs respond well to the good teaching which results from a good understanding of individual targets by all staff. A key factor in the children's success is the way in which they concentrate for long periods. They respond enthusiastically by working hard and most listen attentively. Sometimes adults miss opportunities to extend learning because planning is not sufficiently focused on objectives. The school's good curriculum meets children's needs effectively. There is a good balance of opportunities between independent learning and adult led activities. The balance between small and large group work also helps less confident children to feel included. A recent development has been to position some writing activities strategically near the outdoor area to attract boys, and this has worked well. The school enriches learning through celebrations, local visits, and invitations for members of the community to talk about their work. The school's resources and accommodation are good. The good number of staff have wide ranging experience.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The acting headteacher, supported effectively by staff, has made a good impact since she was appointed, and she provides very clear direction for the school. **Leadership and management of the school are good.** Recent initiatives in analysing performance have been used to sharpen up the curriculum and teaching. The school's development plan clearly outlines the way ahead but lacks sharp measures of success. Governance is satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met. The governing body is enthusiastic but has limited experience of monitoring and evaluating the school's performance. The school is making satisfactory progress in managing its budget but the use of best value principles to set targets and review courses of action is at an early stage of development. Administration and financial procedures are clearly defined and funds have been used wisely to provide good resources and staffing levels.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents express much satisfaction with the school's work and are very pleased with their children's progress. Some would like more information about how they might help their children. The children are happy and well motivated and enjoy coming to school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Increase the rate of children's progress in mathematical development by providing more focused opportunities to practise and refine skills
- Improve planning to include well focused learning objectives and guidance on developing children's vocabulary
- Sharpen up the objectives in the development plan by including more focused measures of success

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Children of all backgrounds and abilities achieve well in most aspects of their learning. By the end of the children's time in the nursery standards are generally below those expected for their age.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children attain appropriate levels for their age in their personal, social and emotional and physical development and in creative skills
- Achievement in mathematical development should be better
- Children at an early stage of learning English make good progress
- Those with special educational needs achieve well

Commentary

1. Standards attained in the areas of learning are at similar levels to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. The impetus provided by the acting headteacher has led to improvements in planning and organisation which are beginning to have a positive impact on the children's progress and achievement. Most children start school with very limited skills, knowledge and understanding. The school deals effectively with several barriers to learning affecting the children's progress. The majority come from poor socio-economic backgrounds. A high proportion of children have pupils with English as an additional language and many are at an early stage of learning English. On starting school, very few children have the confidence and social skills of the average three-year-old. Their mathematical development is at least a year behind children of a similar age.
2. Overall achievement is good and the children make consistent progress. Boys and girls are equally successful although girls are a little in advance of boys in their communication skills. Attainment is below average in mathematical development, communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world because the children's progress is hampered by limited knowledge of English. Where there is less dependence on English the children attain appropriate standards for their age. They make good progress and are working at average levels in personal, social and emotional development, creative and physical development because of the good quality of the curriculum and effective teaching. The children are friendly, readily approach adults and form good relationships with each other. They enjoy painting and printing and make good progress in singing and other musical activities. Children are active and energetic in their physical play and climb, run and balance effectively.
3. Although standards are below average in communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world there is a well focused emphasis on developing skills, knowledge and understanding consistently. The children achieve well in these areas of learning because the teaching often focuses on practising and refining key skills. Children enjoy listening to stories, learning rhymes and practising writing. They experiment with interest with a variety of materials and their properties and are keen observers of physical changes. They take much interest in using computers, and most are proficient at printing their work. The curriculum for mathematical development is less sharply defined and progress, although

satisfactory, is slow compared to other areas of learning. The staff provide appropriate mathematical experiences and activities but there is insufficient emphasis on the regular teaching of skills and challenging opportunities to move learning on at a good pace.

4. The school identifies children with special educational needs effectively and introduces good programmes and support to help these children to make good progress. Inspection evidence shows little variation in the progress of different ethnic groups. Children at an early stage of learning English are assessed well and their specific needs identified. There is a structured programme of support which works well especially in raising levels of confidence and in enabling the children to learn English. The children improve rapidly and, after making good gains in learning basic skills, are introduced to different groups for story time where there is less need of bi-lingual support. Generally more able children make good progress. However, the lack of clear objectives in the planning sometimes means that work is not as demanding as it might be to move learning on at a good pace for these children.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The children respond effectively to consistently well promoted spiritual, moral, social and cultural values. As a result, they are happy, behave well and make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, achieving appropriate levels for their age. Attendance levels are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children respond with enthusiasm and very good levels of interest to the range of activities provided for them
- There are very good relationships between children and adults
- Staff have consistently high expectations of children's behaviour
- Some parents do not bring their children to the nursery regularly enough or on time

Commentary

5. The good provision for spiritual, moral, social, cultural and emotional development ensures that the children understand what is expected of them and begin to develop the confidence to choose sensibly and share activities. Most children are friendly and outgoing individuals who are keen to offer their ideas and views about what they are doing. Because they are gently encouraged to make their own independent choices, many play without adult direction on their own or with their friends, developing their games and happily sharing the resources. In the outside play area, they obey the traffic lights and pedal around the road with determination and sometimes great effort when carrying passengers. This developing confidence is evident in the way that most children move from one activity to another, observing the routines of the classroom and often working for long periods of time with good levels of concentration. The good quality of these aspects of children's development has been maintained well since the last inspection.
6. Staff always listen to the children and value their ideas, using praise well to motivate them to try a bit harder. Because of the good support provided for those children with special needs or who are at an early stage of learning English, all the children are able to take a full part in the life of the nursery. They enjoy listening to stories and singing rhymes. The good language support provided during these sessions enables the

children to understand the meaning and to learn new words easily and naturally. Visits and visitors play an important part in the children's personal development. The good record of photographs kept by the school show many instances of excitement generated by what they are doing. A particular example of this was when the Wizard visited recently and amazed the children with his "magic". A good range of religious and cultural festivals is celebrated and this expands the children's awareness of other lifestyles and beliefs. Parents are supportive of the values promoted by the school and this is an important element in the children's on-going personal, social and emotional development.

7. The procedures for monitoring attendance are satisfactory. However, attendance is unsatisfactory because some parents do not bring their children to school regularly and on time. Although much of the absence relates to childhood illness, there are a number of instances when children are taken on extended holidays.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. The good curriculum is used well to support effective teaching and learning. Staff provide good opportunities to enrich the children's experiences.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good and include the appropriate use of assessment to enable staff to meet the needs of individuals.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is skilful intervention by adults for children at an early stage of learning English
- Teaching of mathematical development is not as strong as in other areas
- Children with learning difficulties are taught well
- Learning objectives are not made clear in planning
- Some opportunities to extend children's vocabulary are missed

Commentary

8. The teaching staff are an effective team who work together well to meet the needs of the children. They provide interesting and worthwhile activities which stimulate in the children a desire to learn. Good links are made between the areas of learning and this enables the children to make good progress in almost all aspects of their learning. Staff focus strongly on inclusion and promote personal, social and emotional development well which provides the building blocks for cooperative and collaborative work. As a result the children are well motivated, concentrate for extended periods and show a willingness to have a go at new and unfamiliar tasks. This was seen to work well in an outdoor activity involving the building of a "house" when the children cooperated in measuring, mixing cement, carrying bricks and digging trenches. Much fun was engendered and the adult intervened well to move learning on through thoughtful suggestions and good questions.
9. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is good. Many children struggle with communication skills initially and staff successfully provide bi-lingual support for those children at an early stage of learning English so that they can participate in the full range of activities. The careful structuring of groups according to their language needs means that those who have little understanding of English benefit from stories in their home language as well as listening to traditional tales in English. Good analysis of children's writing skills has brought recent changes in the organisation of the writing area. Its location close to the computers and outdoor area has attracted an increased number of boys to the activities. Girls also gain from some challenging opportunities to

experiment with different writing experiences and progress in this area is good. Staff use spoken English well and provide good role models although on some occasions they tend to answer their own questions rather than waiting for the children to reply, and opportunities to reinforce new vocabulary are lost.

10. Mathematical development is taught satisfactorily. The staff make use of good resources including number rhymes, songs and games as well as apparatus to stimulate learning. Children enjoy these activities and work hard especially when supported by adults but lack of clarity in the learning objectives means that some of this learning is at rather a low level and does not extend the children sufficiently. There is good teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development as staff focus effectively on promoting skills and understanding through a variety of approaches. They achieve a good balance between directing the children and providing them with opportunities to experiment. This is particularly the case in sand and water play where the children, especially those new to the school, play happily with a variety of containers and tools exploring textures, shapes and volume.

11. Staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use their experience well to plan topics. These activities are relevant and purposeful and engage the children's interest. In creative development the teacher provided a good balance in the teaching of painting and printing skills which included a focus on matching colours to fruit and improving the children's observational skills. Some children went on to apply these skills to express themselves imaginatively; in the ensuing highly effective discussion the children spoke about their pictures and made very good gains in descriptive vocabulary as the teacher recorded their ideas. Planning for each session is thorough and all staff are clear about their roles. Although the plans include many good ideas they are not always sufficiently linked to objectives in the Foundation Stage curriculum and some opportunities to extend learning are missed.

12. Staff have very good relationships with the children and track their progress with interest. There are daily discussions of key moments in the children's progress and accurate recording of their involvement in activities and achievement. Assessment is accurate and detailed records are kept. This information is used to track progress satisfactorily but not always to influence planning. Assessment is most effective in tracking the progress of children with special educational needs. These children receive good support and encouragement and are monitored effectively. Similarly, assessment of the needs of children at an early stage of learning English is accurate and used effectively to pinpoint specific learning requirements.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	1	25	3	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum which meets the needs of boys and girls. There are satisfactory opportunities to extend and enrich learning. The school benefits from good staffing, resources and accommodation.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The inclusive curriculum meets the diverse language and learning needs of the children
- There is good provision to support the children's personal, social and emotional development
- Good links are made between the areas of learning to support English teaching
- Curriculum planning is not sharp enough

Commentary

13. Staff make use of the Foundation Stage curriculum guidance to plan their work and suitable programmes of study provide good opportunities for the children to experience all of the areas of learning. The curriculum has been developed since the previous inspection and other changes are planned. Sessions are planned to provide a good mix of activities which allow the children to make choices and adults to provide specific input in developing skills, knowledge and understanding. This works well in most of the areas of learning but is less successful in mathematical development where learning objectives are not clear enough. Although planning is thorough it generally lacks a sharp edge because objectives are not linked specifically to key skills and the development of understanding.
14. The staff provide an appropriate range of opportunities to enrich learning. Visits into the locality bring alive aspects such as shopping and local landmarks. A variety of visitors share their experiences of work with the children and provide them with an understanding of the world around them and their part in it. Staff also use the children's home backgrounds effectively. There are celebrations of the festivals of major religions and an appreciation of the cultures and traditions present in the community. Recently parents have been involved in providing traditional foods. These activities prepare the children well for the next stage of their education and increase their awareness of their place in a culturally diverse society.
15. The staff attach high priority to the children's personal, social and health education. They encourage healthy eating and an active lifestyle through providing fruit and drinks as well as a challenging outdoor curriculum. Good attention is given to developing social awareness and this programme is successful as many quite young children form friendships quickly. The staff encourage the older children to act as role models for the new starters and this helps the settling in process.
16. The school is inclusive and staff have a good knowledge of the needs of individuals. The good provision for special educational needs works well. The provision is well organised and paperwork is in order. Individual education plans are appropriate although could have sharper and clearer targets. All staff are vigilant in monitoring the progress of these children. Similarly the school makes very good efforts to meet the needs of children at an early stage of learning English. The well structured programmes of support, linked to accurate assessment and focused intervention, help these children to make good progress. The very effective links made by the support staff with parents also contributes much to effective learning by these children. Parents praised the school for its work in this aspect.
17. The school is well staffed and the adults work together effectively. They have a good range of expertise and experience although more training is needed on developing strategies for effective planning. The school has good accommodation and an adventurous and challenging outdoor area which provides a good focal point for many

aspects of learning. Resources are good and in adequate supply. Staff use them well to support learning.

Care, guidance and support

The nursery provides a good level of care for children. The very good relationships between the staff, parents and the children ensure that each child receives a consistently good level of support, advice and guidance.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The kindness and commitment of all staff to the welfare of each child has a positive impact on progress
- The provision for each child's individual needs is very good
- The good support for children and families with limited English ensures that any problems are identified early

Commentary

18. An appropriate range of policies and procedures helps ensure that the school provides a safe and healthy environment. Regular checks of the premises are carried out, but these are not currently recorded. Fire drills take place regularly and the fire alarms are checked. One member of staff is trained in first aid, and training is scheduled for other members of staff in the near future. The headteacher has overall responsibility for child protection issues and awareness amongst all staff of the crucial nature of this aspect of care is very high as a result of recent training. Supervision of the children while in the outside play area is very good and the children are taught how to move around and play safely. Children are taught how to look after themselves and encouraged to eat healthily by the provision of fruit for snacks.
19. The children and their parents trust the staff and know that someone will help them if they are concerned or unhappy. Children's personal, social and emotional development is monitored well and any emerging concerns are identified early and, if necessary, appropriate action taken in full consultation with parents. Children make their individual likes and dislikes known and, in this way, they have an influence over the activities planned for them. At the beginning and end of each session parents have very good opportunities to talk to staff, to pass on any concerns, or simply to stay with their child until he or she is happily settled. The induction process for new parents and children is good enabling staff to form a clear picture of a child's needs and to build a supportive and positive relationship with parents prior to the child joining the nursery. This ensures that the children arrive at school happily and parents have confidence that their small children will be well cared for. The standard of provision overall has been maintained well since the last inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good and effective partnership with parents and with other schools. The links with the community are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have positive views about the work of the school and are very pleased at the quality of care provided
- The school provides very good opportunities for informal consultation with parents
- There is insufficient information about how parents can support their children's learning at home

Commentary

20. The school provides good information for parents, and members of staff are available to interpret when required. The prospectus clearly tells parents what they need to know about their child's first step into formal education and the good induction process expands on this. The examples of children's work displayed around the school enable parents to see what their children are doing in more detail at the beginning and end of the session. Although parents are told about the learning purpose of the activities, there is no easily accessible information on how parents can help their children to extend this learning at home. Informal contact between parents and staff is an integral part of each day and strong, friendly and supportive relationships were seen. Staff always make time for parents and take their views into account.
21. Parents are invited to meet staff at the end of each term, and a detailed report of the year's work is produced at the end of the year. Not all parents choose to come to these meetings. Notices at the entrance remind parents that they can always ask for more information at any time during the year. Parents of those children with special educational needs are fully involved in the decision making process. Several parents involve themselves in helping the school to prepare for celebrations and with cooking interesting foods. The important work of the parent governors is having a good impact on the quality of education at the school. Visits to places within the local community and specialist visitors who come into school extend the children's learning. There are good systems to ensure effective transition to the next stage of education and there are strong, mutually beneficial links with other schools in the area.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is led and managed well. The headteacher leads an effective team. Management is good and ensures the smooth running of the school. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher leads with purposeful enthusiasm
- The staff are an effective team who are committed to school improvement
- The school's strategic plans lack sharpness in measuring success
- The governors have limited experience in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance

Commentary

22. The effectiveness of leadership and management has improved since the previous inspection. The acting headteacher has made a significant impact on accelerating the rate of improvement at the school and the issues raised in the previous inspection report are being tackled. In a time of change the headteacher has played an important part in motivating staff, raising morale and developing the curriculum and teaching. There is a hard working and committed team who share values and focus strongly on meeting the needs of the children. The good climate of inclusion is reflected in the high

quality of support for children with learning difficulties and for those at an early stage of learning English. Leadership provides clear direction and vision for school improvement.

23. Some recent improvements include the sharper focus on strategic planning, which is now satisfactory. The school's improvement plan identifies correct priorities but lacks sharp measures for success. The priorities have been decided through a process of reviewing the school's provision and the headteacher's accurate school self evaluation has been used in setting targets. Another good improvement has been the use of data to compare the school's performance with similar establishments and this has resulted in a review of the school's curriculum. These initiatives are beginning to make an impact.
24. The school is well organised and administration is effective and efficient. Good systems ensure the smooth running of daily routines. The management of the provision for special educational needs works well and ensures that children's needs are met and all staff are sure about their role in helping the children to make progress. The well managed provision for children at an early stage of learning English ensures that children's needs are accurately assessed and provision is targeted effectively. Good records are kept.
25. The governing body is new to delegation. Governors are keen supporters of the school but lack experience in monitoring and evaluating its work. They have been involved in training and have ensured that the school's policies and practice in equal opportunities, race equality and disability access are good. All statutory requirements are met. Good headway has been made in considering financial matters and in linking spending to educational priorities. Performance management is at an appropriate stage of development and there are plans to extend the process to include support staff.
26. The school was given a delegated budget in April 2004 and the headteacher and governors have used funding wisely. The financial administration is good and systems are secure. Funds are used for their specific purpose and reviews of spending are overseen by the governors through the recently formed finance committee. Governors are at an early stage of monitoring the school's performance using best value principles.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well and attain standards appropriate for their age by the time they leave the school
- Teaching is effective and promotes confidence in the children
- Children are enthusiastic and hard working

Commentary

27. The school has maintained its good provision since the previous inspection. The children's good progress in this area of learning is the result of a carefully structured programme of support based on individual need. Staff have a good understanding of the children's strengths and weaknesses and create a caring and purposeful environment in which the children thrive. Those with little English are supported very well, and because of the use of their home language as well as English they adjust quickly to the school's routines. Older children play an important part in helping the new entrants to settle. Parents are especially pleased with the contribution the staff make in helping their children mature.
28. The children's growing confidence is reflected in the way they come into school and make choices. They are especially good at focusing on activities for extended periods, particularly when supported by adults. In the home corner they play together well and staff intervene effectively with well timed questions and by introducing new vocabulary. The children share toys, games and ideas. In a mathematics game they took turns and were delighted by their own and others' success. In outdoor play older children were often seen helping the youngest children to pedal vehicles and to learn about the rules of the road.
29. Children make good progress in caring for themselves. In messy activities they put on aprons and are careful to clear away equipment after use. The school's provision of fruit and healthy drinks is well received by the children and they know that healthy food and plenty of exercise are good for them. They were fascinated by the visit of the dental nurse and practised cleaning their teeth energetically, sometimes experimenting on the nursery toys. The children show a good interest in the customs and languages of their peers and the school works hard to prepare them for life in the community by celebrating a variety of festivals. Good use is made of the children's home backgrounds as parents come into school to cook traditional foods.
30. The provision for personal, social and emotional development is central to the school's work, and the staff show real understanding of individual need. They intervene well through good teaching and encourage the children to be independent. The school's well established routines contribute much to the children's security and they respond by working hard, persevering with tasks and joining in group activities. The provision is well managed and is an effective tool to prepare the children for their next schools. Staff make accurate observations of the children's progress and are vigilant in recording the information which they share with parents.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well
- The teaching is good, although more opportunities are needed to help children reinforce and use newly acquired language
- The curriculum is good so children enjoy their work and are interested in the tasks that are set for them
- Planning does not always match work to the needs of children of differing abilities

Commentary

31. Standards on entry are well below average and although there is a range of ability most children in the nursery need extensive language support to develop their communication, language and literacy skills. Since the last inspection the good rate of progress has been maintained and standards are at a similar level to those found previously. Children achieve well in gaining proficiency in speaking and listening and in the development of early reading and writing skills but when they leave the nursery most are below the level expected for their age. A small number of more able children are close to attaining the early learning goals by the end of their time in the nursery. Good leadership and management of this area of learning help ensure that the teachers work well as a team to support children's development.
32. Teaching and learning are good. The staff build very good relationships with the children which stimulate confidence and, as a result, the children choose well from the range of attractive activities that are provided. Skilled adult intervention helps children to extend their vocabulary and learning experiences. On occasions more could be done to help children use this new language in meaningful talk of their own by the teachers repeating words and encouraging the children to respond to more open-ended questions. Teachers plan the work carefully and identify interesting learning opportunities across the curriculum. However, clearer guidance is needed for teachers to provide work that more closely meets the needs of children of differing abilities. Preparation for lessons is thorough and extensive use is made of the good quality resources to make learning lively. There is a good balance between child chosen activities and more direct teaching in small groups or with individuals.
33. The development of speaking and listening is central to many activities in the nursery and teachers give children a lot of individual support, so that they achieve well. Stories, rhymes and songs play an important part in the daily routine and are repeated often helping the children to gain early speaking and listening skills. Children are enthusiastic and busy; they enjoy the good range of interesting tasks that is provided for them and many like to talk about what they do, although their vocabulary is often limited. The school provides a good range of resources to support children in learning English and the skilled bilingual support assistants contribute much to their success. Staff often speak and read to children using dual language books or successfully blending both languages. The language work with children with special educational needs is also effective; staff work well with the children and use their skills to include the children in all activities.

34. The teachers help children to acquire an interest in books and stories. The regular and enjoyable story times enable the children to begin to understand that stories have a structure and that pictures and print carry meaning. The teachers are skilful at involving the children through rhymes and repetition in stories and foster an enjoyment of reading. The nursery has a good stock of books and the children can take them home on a regular basis to share with parents and carers although not all families take advantage of this. Children become familiar with the purpose of writing; in particular, they are keen to try to write their names and some can do this accurately. Good opportunities are provided for children to follow writing patterns and to trace and copy letters. Generally the girls show more interest in writing but the staff encourage boys to take part in writing activities so that they do not fall behind. Staff keep useful records of the children's progress and accurate assessments of their progress.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Progress and achievement are satisfactory
- The teaching is satisfactory
- By the end of their time in the nursery few children are working at the expected level for their age

Commentary

35. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Children start school with very limited mathematical knowledge and understanding. The curriculum is based on appropriate guidance but planning lacks clarity in pinpointing the skills to be taught and assessment is more to do with recording the children's coverage rather than their acquisition of skills. Children with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Children at an early stage of learning English also improve steadily, although some of their understanding is hampered by lack of mathematical vocabulary.
36. Staff make appropriate provision through the good range of resources available and often sit with the children to play games. The children respond well to these opportunities but the activities tend to be more effective in promoting personal and social skills than enhancing mathematical ideas. There are regular opportunities to learn and sing number rhymes and most children can count to 10 but have a limited understanding of the value of very small numbers. The more able recognise and name some two-dimensional shapes but most are very unsure. Some children recognise a few numerals. In a good sorting exercise a group of girls carefully matched different sizes and colours of teddy bears to a picture but could not describe the simple pattern they had created.
37. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but assessment lacks a sharp focus on identifying the strengths and weaknesses in the children's progress and acquisition of skills. Good use is made of several computer programs to encourage counting and boys in particular are drawn to these activities. Although preparation is thorough and the staff find interesting ways of incorporating mathematics in outdoor and some other activities the lack of learning objectives means that some opportunities to extend mathematical thinking are missed. Good practical work was observed on the *building site* as the children measured the length of the foundations and some of the more able counted the bricks. The teacher emphasised words such as *big, small, tall and long* but did not get the children to practise the words sufficiently.
38. Leadership and management of mathematical development are satisfactory. Mathematical development has been identified by the school as an area for development and the leadership are aware of gaps in the planning and development of skills. Assessment is satisfactory but focuses more on identifying the tasks completed by the children rather than on pinpointing strengths and weaknesses and building that information into subsequent plans.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well
- Children's skills in using computers are close to those expected for their age
- The curriculum is well organised and relevant to the children
- The school suitably reflects the heritage of the mixed faith community that it serves
- Sometimes the learning objectives are not clear enough

Commentary

39. The school works hard to provide a good quality and range of teaching and learning opportunities to compensate for the children's low attainment on admission and limited knowledge of the wider world. The children's good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world has been maintained since the last inspection. The practical experiences provided both inside the nursery and in the outside area and garden arouse curiosity and wonder. Those at an early stage of learning English take a full part in this area of learning and achieve well. Children with special educational needs also benefit much from the practical approach and are taught well. In spite of good progress, by the time they leave the school most children are working at levels below those expected for their age. However, the children make particularly good progress and achieve very well in using computers; this they do with confidence and enjoyment. The children use a wide range of skills, make their own choices and design pictures using paint programs. They have good control over the mouse and some write their names using the keyboard. They confidently print out their work.

40. Developing their knowledge and understanding of the world is an interesting experience in the nursery because the teaching is good. The teachers provide a wide range of practical activities which contribute to understanding some scientific processes. The children have sand and water readily available to explore using a variety of equipment. During the inspection the large outdoor sandpit became a building site and children were involved in building walls and moving soil. They quickly became engaged in the activity and understood why they should wear hardhats and safety goggles. Children show great curiosity and interest in using torches, moving the beam of light to illuminate dark places and make patterns of light on the ceiling. They use magnifying glasses to observe and record the details of an opening hyacinth. At appropriate times of the year the children have opportunities to observe natural happenings, for example the development of tadpoles into frogs. The school makes good use of visitors such as the dental health team to talk to the children and involve them in good quality role-play demonstrating how to care for teeth. The skilled bilingual assistant encourages the children to participate by translating and explaining what is happening so that all the children have good opportunities to participate in the activities. The children are encouraged to be independent and teachers support children well so they are confident and willing to try new experiences. They learn about the wider world by playing out scenarios such as taking the car to the garage to have an MOT, or using the traffic light colours correctly to stop, wait and drive on. The good range of resources is refreshed on a daily basis so that children can play with farm animals on one occasion and on another they have model polar bears and penguins amongst ice blocks.

41. The nursery reflects its multi-ethnic and cultural heritage well by celebrating festivals from the mixed faith community that is represented within the school. There are good

quality displays to support this learning such as the recent celebration of Eid. At other times of the year the children have good opportunities to learn about Christmas, Easter and Diwali. The good provision for this area of learning is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection and there is good overall leadership and management of the area of learning. On a few occasions the children's work was not challenging enough because too little account had been taken of assessment.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children make good progress, achieve well and have skills which are in line with those expected for their age
- Good quality teaching helps children to develop skills, work safely and independently
- The school's outdoor provision is of a good quality

Commentary

42. The children enter the school with below average physical skills and the good opportunities provided means that they develop both fine and bigger movement skills and reach standards in line with those expected for their age. The quality of teaching and learning in this area of learning is consistently good and this means that the children achieve well. The standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. The leadership and management of the area are good and make a significant contribution to the quality of work seen and the achievement of the children.
43. The teachers plan the learning activities well to promote physical development. The outdoor area for the nursery is well equipped and provides challenging and interesting activities for the children to experience independent movement and develop their movement skills. Children use wheeled vehicles confidently to steer and pedal. They enjoy climbing and clambering and make good use of the wide variety of apparatus provided. A particular strength is the way in which the teachers foster the confidence of the children 'to have a go' and extend their physical skills. The encouragement of turn taking and sharing equipment develops the children socially and supports the less confident. In the popular indoor lessons the children explore movement and body shapes, show a good awareness of space and enjoy the sessions. They competently follow and interpret instructions, and respond well when asked to move in a variety of ways.
44. The children use paintbrushes, pencils and scissors with care and precision and have many opportunities to develop fine manipulative control by completing jigsaws and using construction toys. Children at an early stage of learning English learn much through their physical play because the teachers guide them and demonstrate clearly what is needed. Bilingual staff make a significant contribution explaining to the children in their home language what to do and using English vocabulary to help them learn new words. Those with special educational needs take a full part in activities and achieve well. The teachers make good links between physical development and the children's health and well being. Good attention is given to healthy eating.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well and standards are in line with those expected for their age
- Teaching and learning are effective and promote good progress
- Resources are good and give children wide opportunities to explore and use different materials

Commentary

45. Achievement in this area of learning has improved since the last inspection and the children now reach the standards expected for their age. The area is well led and managed and the whole staff demonstrate a strong commitment to teaching and developing the children's confidence in their artistic skills. All the children are involved in the opportunities provided and there is a good balance between those that are adult initiated and those that the children select for themselves.
46. The teachers plan a wide range of activities that promote the children's ability to express themselves using their imagination. Good attention is given to using creative activities to promote the children's development of language and also their ability to express themselves without always using words. Children are given regular opportunities to sing and make music; good teaching ensures that these are inclusive and enjoyable experiences. Independently children select instruments and engage in an impromptu concert session showing that they have a good sense of rhythm. They know a range of songs and rhymes.
47. A particular strength is the way in which children concentrate very well and make very good use of the art and craft opportunities available. They enjoy painting and are often excited by and proud of the results they produce. Sometimes they paint using colours for the sheer joy of seeing the effect they can make; other children paint complex scenes which they can describe in detail. Lots of opportunities for tactile experiences are provided. Sand, water, playdough and collage materials are freshly presented each day so that the children have good opportunities to use their imagination as they explore the different materials.
48. The children make good use of role-play areas both indoors and outside, and teachers creatively provide opportunities for the children to play co-operatively and alone. The teachers often focus on language development to help children from different backgrounds and those with special educational needs get the most from the activities. The school has good resources to promote imaginative play and for the children to enact familiar happenings in their lives and these resources are well used. Especially popular is the home corner - and the chance to thoroughly wash the school's babies. Outdoors the large sandpit provides a range of scenarios - during the inspection it became a building site where children worked together to dig, mix cement and construct walls. Progress was enhanced because of good quality intervention and questioning by the teacher.

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	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
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	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	3
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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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