

INSPECTION REPORT

TENTERFIELD NURSERY SCHOOL

Welwyn

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117078

Acting headteacher: Mrs C Clements

Lead inspector: Mr M Capper

Dates of inspection: 3rd - 4th May 2005

Inspection number: 268034

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 Children:	3 - 5
Gender of children:	Mixed
Number on roll:	81
School address:	London Road Welwyn Hertfordshire
Postcode:	AL6 9JF
Telephone number:	(01438) 714 564
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Eggington
Date of previous inspection:	May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a small Nursery school, which admits children between the ages of three and five, with most attending the school for four terms. There are 74 children who attend the school for either morning or afternoon sessions, as well as seven who attend the school full time. Children live in the local and surrounding villages and come from a diverse mix of home backgrounds. There are five children on the register of special educational needs; none of these has a statement of special educational need. As a proportion, this is broadly in line with national averages, with most of these children identified as having speech or communication difficulties. When they join the school, children's attainment is above average. Most children are of white British origin and there are none with English as an additional language.

At the time of the inspection, the school was being led by an acting headteacher who is a long-serving teacher at the school. She was being supported on a part-time basis by the recently retired headteacher.

Since the last inspection, the school has introduced paid-for 'wrap-around care' for children (care that is provided for children in addition to the Nursery session they attend), which provides care for 50 weeks of the year from 8.00am to 6.00pm on each day. The 'wrap-around care' was not inspected as part the Section 10 inspection.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23239	Mike Capper	Lead inspector	Personal, social and emotional development Mathematical development Physical development
9545	Kevin Greatorex	Lay inspector	
23609	Alison Cartlidge	Team inspector	Communication, language and literacy Knowledge and understanding of the world Creative development Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school, with many very good features. The school is very successful at developing children's social skills. Children are keen to learn and are happy at school. They achieve well, benefiting from good teaching and a good curriculum. The school is well led by the acting headteacher, who is ably supported by other members of staff and the governing body. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Members of staff work together very well and there is a clear and shared vision for school development.
- The school is very successful at including children with a diverse range of educational and social needs.
- Attainment is very good in personal, social and emotional development and children develop very high levels of independence, confidence and self-esteem.
- Not enough use is made of monitoring to share good practice and to ensure that there is consistency in teaching across the school.
- Group times, when children plan and review their work, are not always used effectively to extend learning and to build on what has already been taught.
- There are very good links with parents who are very pleased with the work of the school.
- Care and support are very good, helping children to feel secure, happy and valued.
- There is a very good outdoor curriculum that provides children with a wide range of exciting and interesting activities.
- Members of staff do not always do enough to support and encourage the development of early writing skills.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection, maintaining the good levels of attainment found at that time. Improvements since the last inspection include the provision of paid-for 'wrap-around care' and the development of the building to provide more space, including a music room and a small-group room. These developments have significantly enhanced provision.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Children's achievement is good throughout the Nursery, with their attainment being well above expected levels in personal, social and emotional development and above them in the other areas of learning. In personal, social and emotional development, children achieve very well and they have very good levels of independence. In mathematical development, children quickly improve their counting skills, with teachers and nursery nurses making good use of numbers in practical situations. In physical development, climbing skills are particularly good because of the very good quality of outdoor resources. In creative development, children confidently experiment with a very wide range of attractive art resources and compose simple songs by sequencing colours. In knowledge and understanding of the world, members of staff plan a very good range of activities, helping children to develop a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding for their age.

In communication, language and literacy, children achieve well in speaking, listening and reading. Early reading skills are taught effectively and children have good opportunities to develop their speech. In writing, achievement is satisfactory; there are some missed opportunities to develop writing skills and there are occasions when members of staff are insufficiently vigilant in ensuring that children form letters correctly.

Children with special educational needs achieve well. They are given good practical support, ensuring that they are fully involved in all activities and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. There are no significant variations between the attainment and achievement of boys and girls or of children from different backgrounds.

Children's personal qualities, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Children develop good attitudes and values and they generally behave well. Attendance is good; children are keen to come to school but not all arrive punctually and this adversely affects the start of each session when children go into groups to plan their work.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall, and are very good in personal, social and emotional development. Teachers and nursery nurses work together very well. They have good expectations and plan interesting and exciting activities. Teaching assistants provide patient and sensitive support for children with special educational needs. Assessment procedures are very thorough and are used well to support learning. Resources are readily accessible to all children during independent activities. This enables children to pursue their own interests and develop their ideas. Each day, there are small-group sessions where children plan what they want to do when working independently. These vary in quality and, on occasions, the planning process is rushed and there are missed opportunities to extend learning, especially of older or more able children.

The curriculum is good. There are very good levels of care, welfare, health and safety, with children being given very good support and guidance. Accommodation and resources are good. There is a very good partnership with parents and good links with the community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The acting headteacher and other members of staff have high aspirations and a clear vision for the future of the school. The teamwork and shared sense of purpose that is apparent throughout the school is a strong feature of the school's work, with all members of staff having the children's wellbeing and education at the forefront of their planning. This means that the school is in a strong position to improve further in the future. The effectiveness of management is satisfactory. Whilst day-to-day management is efficient, there is limited formal monitoring of teaching and learning and this means that there are missed opportunities to share good practice and to ensure that there is greater consistency in the quality of teaching across the school. Governance is good. The chair of governors has a very good working relationship with the acting headteacher, and other governors are very supportive. Statutory requirements are met well. Financial planning is good, with the recently retired headteacher, who continues to support the acting headteacher, making a significant contribution to the management of the school's budget. Governors are knowledgeable about the current financial situation and financial planning is based on a good understanding of the school's priorities.

PARENTS' AND CHILDREN'S VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very pleased with the work of the school. They like the good quality teaching and the high levels of care provided for their children. Children like all members of staff. They like being able to choose what they are going to do and they especially enjoy working outside.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Implement plans to introduce more formal systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.
- Ensure that there is greater consistency to the quality of sessions when children 'plan and review' their work.
- Raise the profile of writing in the Nursery.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY CHILDREN

Standards achieved in areas of learning

Children achieve well, with their attainment being well above expected levels in personal, social and emotional development and above them in the other areas of learning. There are no significant variations between the attainment and achievement of boys and girls or of children from different backgrounds.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's achievement is very good in personal, social and emotional development.
- In knowledge and understanding of the world, and mathematical, physical and creative development children's achievement is good.
- In communication, language and literacy, children make good progress in developing speaking and listening skills and reading; in writing, achievement is satisfactory.
- Children with special educational needs achieve well; there are the occasional missed opportunities to extend learning, especially of older or more able children during 'plan and review' sessions.

Commentary

1. Children's attainment on starting school at the age of three is above average. This is confirmed by a variety of teacher assessments made in the children's first few weeks in the Nursery. As at the time of the last inspection, children achieve well throughout the Nursery, benefiting from good teaching and an exciting and relevant curriculum, with differing needs met effectively in most areas of learning.
2. In personal, social and emotional development, children's attainment is very good and they achieve very well because of the very good quality teaching and the strong emphasis that is given throughout the school day to encouraging independence and responsibility. Children have very good levels of independence and they organise themselves well on free-choice activities. They play well together and generally share resources amicably. They handle equipment with care and are very good at helping to tidy up at the end of the sessions.
3. In communication, language and literacy, children achieve well in speaking, listening and reading, and make satisfactory progress in developing writing skills. Children have good opportunities to develop their speech when working on independent tasks with their peers, and when talking to children in their small groups. Early reading skills are taught well because members of staff use resources to capture the children's interest. However, in writing, where achievement is satisfactory, members of staff make limited use of writing as a means of demonstration or communication when working with groups of children, and they are insufficiently vigilant in ensuring that children form letters correctly. This occasionally restricts achievement as children learn bad habits.
4. In the other areas of learning, children's achievement is good overall. In mathematical development, children develop good counting skills, with members of staff making good use of numbers in practical situations. As a result, children become curious about numbers and they begin to understand why it is important to learn how to count. In physical development, climbing skills are particularly good because of the very good quality of outdoor resources. Children grow in confidence and use a wider range of skills as they get older because they get good opportunities to explore ideas for themselves at their own pace. In creative development, children confidently experiment with a very wide range of attractive art resources and compose simple songs by sequencing colours. In knowledge and understanding of the world, members of staff plan a very good range of activities to engage and sustain children's interest

when they are working independently, meaning that children develop a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding for their age.

5. Children with special educational needs also achieve well. They are given good practical support, ensuring that they are fully involved in all activities and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Children who have been identified as having speech difficulties have their needs met successfully, and specifically made books are used effectively to help them communicate their choice of activity.
6. Older and more able children generally achieve well, although there are some missed opportunities to use planning times at the start of sessions to guide and challenge children into more challenging free-choice tasks. The quality of adult intervention varies greatly at these times and does not always provide sufficient challenge.

Children' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Children's personal qualities, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good overall. Children develop good attitudes and values, and behave well. Attendance is good. Punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have positive attitudes to the school and their learning.
- Children demonstrate good behaviour in lessons and around the school although a small number of children in morning sessions are occasionally less well behaved.
- Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Some parents are not sufficiently diligent in ensuring that their children arrive at school on time.

Commentary

7. Children have positive attitudes to the school and their work. From the earliest stages, children come happily to school and are eager and ready to learn. The school provides a wide range of activities to promote their interest and they are prepared to work hard and participate fully in all activities. They show very good levels of independence and persevere well with their tasks. The enthusiasm continues through the school and as they grow older children become more confident and develop high levels of self-esteem. This means that they are not worried about trying out new activities and is an important factor in the good achievement of children.
8. Behaviour throughout the school has been maintained well since the last inspection and continues to be good overall, although a small number of children in morning sessions are more boisterous and this sometimes slows the pace of learning. In contrast, there is a very calm and purposeful atmosphere around the Nursery in the afternoon, with children rising to the challenge of high expectations set by the school. Children get on well together and work happily in small or large groups, sharing their achievements as they do so.
9. Personal, social and emotional development has been well maintained since the last inspection and is very good overall. Children are given many opportunities to develop their maturity and take responsibility and they respond very well. Spiritual development continues to be well cultivated. Children are encouraged to show respect for themselves and for others. Moral and social development is good. Children are constantly encouraged to distinguish right from wrong as they learn to work co-operatively with each other.
10. Attendance has been maintained well since the last inspection and continues to be good. The school works well with parents and makes them aware of the need for regular attendance.

However, not all children are brought to school on time and this limits the school's attempts to make a prompt and efficient start to sessions.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching, learning and the curriculum are good and there are good assessment procedures. There are very good levels of care, welfare, health and safety, with children given very good support and guidance. There is a very good partnership with parents and good links with the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Members of staff support children's personal and social skills very well.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support for children with special educational needs.
- There are very thorough procedures for assessing what children have learnt, enabling members of staff to provide equal opportunities for all children.
- Resources are used very well to support learning, especially when children are working independently.
- Teaching varies in quality during group 'planning and review' sessions.
- Teachers provide limited guidance in the development of writing.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 16 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	2	9	5	0	0	0

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

- Teaching and learning are good overall, and are very good in personal, social and emotional development. Members of staff have high expectations for the development of children's manners and good moral teaching enables children to understand the difference between right and wrong. Members of staff provide very good role models for social behaviour and relationships. High expectations for taking the initiative enable children to work very well independently. Teaching and learning are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.
- Children with differing special educational needs are welcomed and supported effectively. Members of staff work closely with the co-ordinator for special educational needs and write individual education plans that set clear and measurable targets for development. Teaching assistants provide patient and sensitive support for these children in lessons, enabling them to join in with as many tasks as they are able. Resources are provided to support the children with tasks they might find difficult so that they are fully included in the life of the school.
- As at the time of the last inspection, assessment procedures are very thorough and are used well to support learning. Members of staff have a good knowledge and understanding of each child in the Nursery because they work with all children during the week and they help to maintain the very thorough records on attainment and progress. The information in these records is used well to set individual targets for all children and to plan activities, although there are occasions when targets are not specific enough to help with the planning of work.

14. Resources are readily accessible to all children during independent activities. This enables children to pursue their own interests and develop their ideas. Each member of staff is responsible for maintaining and refreshing the resources provided for the area of learning they manage. They are successful in ensuring that these resources remain inviting, and continue to provide interest and engage the children in their learning.
15. Each day, there are small group sessions where children plan what they want to do when working independently. These vary in quality from satisfactory to very good. In the best sessions, teachers and nursery nurses encourage children to explain how they will work by asking challenging questions. In the less effective sessions, the choosing process is rushed and children attach their name card to an activity without discussing what they intend doing.
16. Overall, members of staff provide good guidance as children work; however, support for children's writing is underdeveloped and children are given little direct teaching in how to form letters correctly or spell simple words. Opportunities are missed for members of staff to demonstrate the way writing can be used to communicate.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good; the school provides suitable opportunities for enriching the curriculum. Accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good outdoor curriculum.
- Very good provision is made for the development of the children's personal skills.
- The curriculum is adapted well for children with special educational needs.
- Numeracy is promoted well across the curriculum, although there are missed opportunities to promote writing and ICT.
- Time is not always used well for 'plan and review' in small group sessions.
- Accommodation and resources support learning well.

Commentary

17. As at the time of the last inspection, the curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. The Nursery has an extensive outdoor area that is very well resourced to provide activities to support learning across the curriculum. There are designated sections for each area of learning, enabling the children to carry out similar tasks when working inside or outdoors. In addition, outside, there is room for children to take part in several more adventurous or lively physical activities, such as climbing, ball skills and riding wheeled vehicles.
18. The very good curriculum for personal, social and emotional development has been maintained successfully since the time of the last inspection. The development of children's initiative and independence is especially well promoted and supports children very well in gaining confidence when working with each other and different adults. Children are prepared well for the next stage of their education.
19. There is good provision for children with special educational needs. Their needs are identified quickly and support directed where it is needed most. Individual education plans are sharply focused, discussed with the parents and all members of staff, and are reviewed thoroughly each term. These children are enabled to take a full part in all activities.
20. A recent focus on numeracy has raised the profile of this subject and there are good opportunities for children to practise counting skills to support learning. In addition, there are several counting programs that are in frequent use on the computers. In contrast, writing has a relatively low profile and has not been an area that has been developed recently.

Opportunities are also missed to use ICT to support learning in literacy and creative development. The school has identified the need to develop the use of ICT to support learning across the curriculum.

21. At the start of each day, members of staff discuss or 'plan' with children in small groups what activities they would like to choose. These sessions vary in quality because not all children arrive in time for the start of the session, some groups meet near thoroughfares and some children lose attentiveness if other groups finish first and start working on activities in the same room. After children have had the chance to work independently, the groups meet together again and one or two children share or 'review' with the group what they have been doing. Some of these sessions are quite lengthy for children of this age, because they also include snack-time, and the younger and less mature children are sometimes too tired to concentrate and when this happens, time is not used effectively.
22. As at the time of the last inspection, the school offers good accommodation and resources. The partially open-plan building is divided into designated bays that are resourced well to support each area of learning. This arrangement makes best use of the resources and makes them readily accessible to the children.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good care of the children's individual needs. It effectively promotes the children's welfare in a secure and caring environment. Support and guidance for children are very good. The school takes good account of children's ideas and opinions.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides well for the children's welfare, health and safety.
- Children are not always expected to wash their hands before snack times.
- Children trust members of staff who provide sensitive support to meet their individual needs.
- Induction arrangements are good and children are well prepared for their next schools.

Commentary

23. The school continues to promote effectively the welfare, health and safety of the children in a warm, caring and secure environment. Health and safety are well monitored. Site inspections are conducted and risks assessed to identify potential hazards and prepare action plans for correction. All members of staff are safety conscious and watch for the security of the children. Child protection procedures are effective. Members of staff have recently reviewed their roles and responsibilities in respect of child protection issues. They understand the need for vigilance and the steps to take if suspicions are aroused. There are very few weaknesses in the care taken of children. However, during the inspection it was noteworthy that children did not always wash their hands before snack times, and they often handled different pieces of fruit before choosing one.
24. The school has improved the quality of support and guidance for the children's individual needs which now is very good. Relationships continue to be of high quality. The trust that is built enables all children to know that there is an adult in whom they can confide. In this small school, all members of staff know all the children very well and are well equipped to offer high quality support and guidance when it is needed. This has a positive impact on children's achievement.
25. Children are properly involved in the development of the school. Members of staff listen to their ideas and opinions and welcome their input. Children know that they are listened to and their increasing maturity enables them to express their views confidently.

26. The good quality induction procedures enable the children to feel comfortable from the moment that they first start school in the Nursery. Through the good quality transition arrangements, children feel well prepared for the move to their next schools.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are extremely supportive of the school and its work.
- The school works hard to involve parents in their children's education.
- Parents are kept well informed with very good quality information.
- There are good links with the community and other schools.

Commentary

27. The school has worked hard to improve the partnership with parents since the last inspection and it is now very good. Parents responding to the questionnaires and most of those attending the meeting were extremely supportive of the school. They believe that it has many strengths. The responses to all but one of the points included in the questionnaire were highly positive. The 'wrap around care' provided by the school is very well regarded by parents.
28. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the life of the school and many respond positively. The PTA organises many fund-raising and social activities in support of the school. The school values highly the efforts of parents, visitors and other members of the community for the valuable contributions that they make to the quality of education and the children's learning.
29. The quality of the information for parents about their children's learning has been maintained well and continues to be very good. Learning plans each term give very good information about progress, what the children know, understand and can do and include targets for improvement. Annual reports link well with the learning plans, giving parents a very clear overview of their children's development. The clear judgements detail precisely the skills that they have acquired. To improve the very high standard even further the inspection team agrees with parents that the school should provide parents with more information on how they can help their children's learning at home.
30. The school continues to maintain the links with the community and other schools and colleges. The school's links with the church, specialist agencies and emergency services are used well to extend children's awareness of the community. The school works actively with partner schools to ensure an effective and supportive transition to children's new schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The acting headteacher provides good leadership. The leadership of other key staff, including the support headteacher, is good. The effectiveness of management is satisfactory. Governance is good, with statutory requirements met very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher, other members of staff and governors have high aspirations for school improvement.
- There is a very strong commitment to including children with differing needs and from different backgrounds.

- The formal monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure that there is consistency in teaching across the school and to share good practice is not firmly established.
- There are good opportunities for staff to undertake professional development.
- Governors make a good contribution to the leadership of the school.
- Financial planning is good.

Commentary

31. The acting headteacher provides good leadership for the work of the school. She is well supported by governors and by other members of staff, including the recently retired headteacher who continues to work in the school on a part-time basis as a support to the acting headteacher. Together, they have high aspirations and they have established a clear, shared vision for the future of the school. The great amount of time that has been spent over the last three years in developing 'wrap around care' has significantly enhanced provision and there is now a good focus on developing other aspects of the school's work. Development planning is good. The development plan sets a clear agenda for school improvement, with realistic workloads and timescales for a school of this size. The teamwork and shared sense of purpose that are apparent throughout the school is a significant feature of the school's work, with all members of staff having the children's wellbeing and education at the forefront of their planning. This means that the school is in a strong position to improve further in the future.
32. The school is very inclusive. The headteacher and governors have a strong commitment to providing an all-inclusive school, and members of staff work hard to provide for children who have learning difficulties or other academic or social needs. Very good care is taken to ensure that all children enjoy school and are fully integrated. Provision for special educational needs is well led and managed by the co-ordinator. Recommended procedures are carefully followed and record keeping is systematic. Funding for children with special educational needs is spent appropriately for their benefit.
33. Procedures for monitoring the work of the school are satisfactory. The size and nature of the school means that a great deal of monitoring is informal, with the organisation of the day ensuring that all members of staff are able to observe what is going on elsewhere in the school. Regular planning meetings also give members of staff good opportunities to talk about different aspects of the school's work. Good use is made of test data showing how well children are achieving to identify trends in attainment and the specific skills of teachers and nursery nurses have been used well to allocate responsibilities for different subject areas. However, the formal monitoring of provision by the acting headteacher and subject co-ordinators through the observation of teachers and nursery nurses is less well developed. This means that not all areas that need development have been identified and there are missed opportunities to share good practice in order to ensure that there is greater consistency in the quality of teaching across the school. The acting headteacher has identified the need to develop monitoring further and is working hard to establish a climate where the monitoring and evaluation of teachers and nursery nurses are accepted as an everyday part of life. New procedures for monitoring each other's work have been developed and were due to be implemented shortly after the inspection.
34. Day-to-day management is efficient. This means that the school runs smoothly, despite the acting headteacher's heavy teaching commitment. Members of staff are given good support, guidance and relevant training. There has been a good focus on using in-service training to develop the skills of members of staff. The commitment to professional development involves all members of staff. For example, nursery nurses are being supported as they undertake advanced studies in early years provision.
35. Governance is good. The chair of governors has a very good working relationship with the acting headteacher and other governors are very supportive. Statutory requirements are met very well. There is an effective committee structure which helps governors to have an

overview of the work of the school and means that they are able to contribute well to shaping its vision and direction. The acting headteacher keeps the governing body well informed but its own monitoring is less formalised, being largely reliant on drop-in visits. The chair of governors has rightly identified the need to formalise monitoring procedures so that governors are able to form their own views on school effectiveness.

36. Financial planning is good. This is an area where the support headteacher has had a significant input in the current academic year. Governors are knowledgeable about the current financial situation and planning is based on a good understanding of the school's priorities, with budgetary decisions involving both the Nursery and the 'wrap around care' made carefully on the basis of *'How will this help the school to improve?'* Best value principles are applied appropriately and a recent local authority audit found financial procedures to be very good with few areas that needed addressing. Spending has been targeted on maintaining additional staffing as well as improving the quality of accommodation. Both of these aims have been successfully achieved.

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 **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's achievement is very good.
- Teaching is very good, with members of staff very successful at promoting children's independence and responsibility.
- There are missed opportunities for children to share their ideas when they 'plan' where they are going to work.

Commentary

37. Children's attainment is very good, with nearly all children on target to exceed the expectations of the 'early learning goals' by the end of the Foundation Stage (Reception Year). This is similar to attainment at the time of the last inspection, with children continuing to make very good progress. Children play together well and support each other in their learning. They show interest in each other and are responsive to each other's needs, for example showing pleasure when somebody succeeds at completing a difficult task. They have very good levels of independence and self-esteem, are confident when talking with adults and are enthusiastic about trying new activities. They play well together and generally share resources amicably. They handle equipment with care and are very good at helping to tidy up at the end of the sessions.
38. All children, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well because of the very good quality teaching and the strong emphasis that is given throughout the curriculum to encouraging independence and responsibility. Members of staff are very patient and act as good role models. They have very high expectations of the personal and social skills that children should learn and use questioning and discussion effectively to support children in their learning. When necessary, members of staff encourage children to resolve problems by themselves, helping them to understand that they have responsibility for their own behaviour. The very good relationships that are evident between children and adults mean that children feel secure and happy at school. They settle quickly to their tasks and most concentrate well for long periods of time. The school is well resourced and teachers and nursery nurses make very good use of these resources to make learning exciting. This means that children are keen to learn and develop positive attitudes toward school.
39. Role-play is used very effectively to encourage children to co-operate with each other. Teachers plan different role-play opportunities both indoors and outdoors, which give children the chance to work together and to share ideas. When working in the 'travel agents', children take on different roles, with adults intervening, when appropriate, to extend learning.
40. An important part of the school's approach to developing personal and social skills are the times at the start of each session when children plan what they are going to do and at the end of each session when they review what they have been doing. There is often a disturbed start to these sessions, with some children arriving after the start of the school day, and sessions disrupted by children and parents passing through classrooms. The quality of adult support at these times varies. On occasions, there is very good intervention, with members of staff using questioning well to help children to talk about their ideas to the group. For example, in one 'planning' session, the children talked through a telephone, exploring with the nursery nurse exactly what they were planning to do and how they could extend their learning. However, at other times the planning session is very short and there is very little adult intervention. This

limits the value of these sessions. There are missed opportunities for children to share with each other what they are planning to do and the lack of discussion with a member of staff means that there are missed opportunities for children to value each other's work, to extend learning and to promote listening skills.

41. Procedures for assessing children's progress are very good. All members of staff are involved in noting achievements, which are then shared with the rest of the staff and parents. The information gained from these assessments is used very effectively to help teachers and nursery nurses decide what needs to be taught next. This means that learning is well planned and is based on a good understanding of individual needs.
42. The subject is well led by a nursery nurse. There is a good range of assessment data which is used effectively to identify trends and to monitor progress overtime. Management is satisfactory because there is little opportunity for subject leaders to monitor formally the quality of teaching and learning in their subject.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn to speak confidently and most listen well.
- Teachers and nursery nurses provide good role models for reading, although writing skills are less well promoted and developed.
- Resources are used well to support the teaching of letter sounds.
- Very thorough assessment procedures help members of staff to understand the children's differing needs and to support those with special educational needs well.

Commentary

43. Children's attainment is good, with most children on target to exceed the expectations of the 'early learning goals' by the end of the Foundation Stage. All children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in speaking, listening and reading, and make satisfactory progress in developing writing skills. Standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.
44. Children have good opportunities to develop their speech when working on independent tasks with their peers, and when talking to children in their small groups. Members of staff praise children enthusiastically and take a genuine interest in their views and ideas. This enables children to be competent and confident speakers and to feel that their contributions are valued. Children have sufficient confidence to make up their own stories whilst playing, to ask questions and to experiment with, and enjoy, made-up words. Children who have been identified as having speech difficulties are supported well, and specifically made books are used effectively to help them communicate their choice of activity.
45. Children listen best when working with a friend or an adult, or when listening to a story. Most children listen well when adults are speaking, but some less mature children, find it difficult to concentrate when other children are talking to their group about their experiences. At these times, some members of staff do not intervene enough, or encourage children to ask each other questions to increase their involvement and interest. Members of staff play games to help develop children's ability to listen. For example, children passed jingle-bells around behind their backs and other children pointed to where they thought the bells were hidden. In this good lesson, the teacher's enthusiasm and subtle behaviour management enabled all children, including those identified as having specific behavioural difficulties, to participate and enjoy the activity.

46. Teaching and learning are good overall. Members of staff are skilful storytellers and make books come to life by making effective use of expression, by asking challenging questions, and by encouraging children to join in with repetitions. Higher attaining children are keen to predict what might happen next in a story and are quick to identify rhyming words. Whilst a wide range of attractive writing materials are available, and children sometimes choose to make pictures and marks to represent words, writing has a relatively low profile in the Nursery. ICT is under-utilised as a tool for writing, and captions on wall displays often provide information for parents and visitors rather than being child friendly. Members of staff make limited use of writing as a means of demonstration or communication when working with groups of children, and they are insufficiently vigilant in ensuring that children form letters correctly. Overall, teaching and learning are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.
47. Early reading skills are taught well because members of staff use resources to capture the children's interest. For example, the acting headteacher used a collection of interesting objects to help children invent their own simple sentences involving rhyming words. In a successful storytime taken by a teacher, a child with special educational needs was supported well by a teaching assistant who had a smaller version of the big book being shared with the group. This enabled the child to remain focused, and to take part in the same activity as his peers. The library includes a good range of colourful fiction and non-fiction books representing a variety of cultures. Following a recent request from parents, children can choose library books to share at home.
48. Members of staff keep good records showing what children have learnt. Each term, members of staff share with parents the children's targets for improvement. Individual education plans for children with special educational needs also provide clear targets, and these are reviewed regularly. Individual portfolios of work are maintained each term to show how children are developing. However, these include comparatively few examples of children's developing writing skills.
49. The subject is led well by the acting headteacher, who takes responsibility for the subject action plan and for planning activities that support children's learning. Management of the subject is satisfactory because the monitoring of teaching is informal and individual strengths are not shared sufficiently or weaknesses in practice identified and rectified quickly.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in developing early numeracy skills.
- Teachers are successful at making learning purposeful and fun.
- There is an interesting and relevant curriculum and very good assessment procedures.

Commentary

50. Children's attainment is good, with most children on target to exceed the expectations of the 'early learning goals' by the end of the Foundation Stage. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Children achieve well, especially in developing counting skills. They make good progress because of the seamless way that children are given opportunities to develop and practise counting skills across the curriculum. Members of staff are very careful about using numbers in practical situations, for example counting the number of children who are having milk. This encourages the children to become curious about numbers and helps them to understand why it is important to learn how to count. Children enjoy taking part in mathematical activities because learning is made purposeful. They are keen to answer questions and co-operate with each other when playing counting games. There is good focus

on teaching children mathematical vocabulary and effective use is made of ICT to provide practice in number recognition and counting.

51. Children with special educational needs achieve well. They are given good support by all members of staff, helping them participate fully in activities. Members of staff have a good awareness of the needs of the different children in the Nursery and successfully vary their support and their questioning in order to ensure that all develop skills at a good rate.
52. The quality of teaching and learning is good, whether during group sessions, or through individual support during 'free-choice' times. Planning for activities is very thorough and is based on a good understanding of what children have already achieved. Teachers and nursery nurses support children well in their learning when they are working independently. Work is carefully prepared and resources are used imaginatively to extend learning. Learning is always made fun and children develop a very positive attitude to working mathematically. They show great enjoyment when taking part in mathematical activities. They are keen to answer questions and co-operate with each other when playing counting games.
53. Some opportunities to extend learning are missed during children's 'planning' sessions, when the quality of adult input varies in quality. When there is good input, members of staff explore with children what they are going to do, asking questions to support learning and then talking about what has been learnt in the review time at the end of the session. However, some children's planning is perfunctory, with very little adult intervention to guide choices. At these times, more could be done to challenge ideas in order to extend learning.
54. The curriculum is good. Mathematics is very well integrated into everyday activities, and members of staff work hard to promote mathematical skills during 'free-choice' activities.
55. Leadership of the subject is good. Very good records of children's attainment are kept, based on daily observation of the children at work. This information is used effectively to help members of staff to plan future activities for the different sessions during each day. Management is satisfactory. The monitoring of teaching is informal and this means that there are missed opportunities to share good practice and to identify strengths and weaknesses in provision across the school.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Interesting activities encourage children to explore the world around them.
- ICT is used well to support mathematical and physical development, although limited use is made of the computers to support other areas of learning.
- There are good opportunities for children to construct models.
- Arrangements for assessing progress are very thorough.

Commentary

56. Children's attainment is good, with most children on target to exceed the expectations of the 'early learning goals' by the end of the Foundation Stage. All children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Good progress has been successfully maintained since the time of the last inspection.
57. Children's curiosity is stimulated well because indoors and outside, there is a very good range of activities to engage and sustain their interest when they are working independently. For example, during the inspection, children watched with excitement as chicks hatched in an incubator and enjoyed exploring various habitats created from water, rocks and soil for the toy

mini-beasts. Children use symbols to keep a weather chart and draw a picture to show the route they take to school. Children use bricks to copy features seen on pictures of historic buildings.

58. Teaching is good and has been maintained successfully since the time of the last inspection. Members of staff use registration time to help promote knowledge of the names of the months and of days of the week. Health and safety are promoted well, enabling children to use tools such as a hammer and saw correctly.
59. ICT is used well to extend children's numeracy, and there are frequent opportunities for children to play simple counting games on the computer. The remote control cars and track-way are especially popular with the boys, and improve their hand control effectively. However, there are limited opportunities for children to use ICT to create pictures and to write. The school has identified ICT as a priority for school development.
60. Members of staff provide clear guidance on how to use construction kits to make models. For example, during the inspection a nursery nurse supported children well as they made moving vehicles. The digital camera was used effectively to keep a record of what had been made and to enable children to share their successes with their parents. Children are inventive and independent when making models, and they join a range of reclaimed materials using glue, split pins and sticky tape.
61. There are very thorough assessment arrangements that are used well to identify targets for children's future learning. The co-ordinators provide good plans for the subject, although have insufficient time to monitor teaching.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well.
- Teachers meet differing needs well.
- The very good outdoor accommodation has a good impact on learning.

Commentary

62. Children's attainment is good, with most children on target to exceed the expectations of the 'early learning goals' by the end of the Foundation Stage. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Children achieve well, with their climbing skills being particularly good because of the very good quality of outdoor resources. They grow in confidence and use a wider range of skills as they get older. When working outdoors, children show a wide range of skills, including good co-ordination for their age. They enjoy playing on the fixed play equipment. More able children show considerable skills in climbing and performing various swinging and balancing movements. They ride wheeled vehicles confidently. When working indoors, children run, jump and hop showing appropriate care and make different sorts of balances using different parts of their bodies. They enjoy moving to music and are able to use their imagination well to make different body shapes.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is good. During 'free-choice' time, activities are well planned and learning is made purposeful. There is a very good range of resources, especially outdoors, and children are given many opportunities to explore and experiment with different pieces of equipment. This helps them to improve skills. Children are confident and adventurous and share equipment and resources well. Children concentrate and persevere on activities such as climbing and riding bikes. Adults give good quality support to children when they are working independently. Teachers and nursery nurses know the children well and talk to them about what

they are doing, often extending learning by the careful use of questioning. Children are encouraged to think about the effects of exercise on their body and are taught to look after their bodies.

64. Teachers and nursery nurses have a good awareness of health and safety issues and they manage behaviour effectively. Good use is made of praise and this has a good impact on their confidence and self-esteem.
65. Children with special educational needs are well supported and they also achieve well, making good progress in developing physical skills. Great care is taken by adults to introduce new language to all children as they are working. For example, members of staff introduce words like 'over', 'under' and 'through' when working with children on large construction kits.
66. There is a good curriculum that is managed well by a nursery nurse. Children are given a wealth of different activities to choose from each day. This includes regular access to outdoor activities. There is a good balance between activities that are led by an adult and activities where children choose for themselves. Planning is detailed and covers all aspects of the area of learning. Teachers and nursery nurses thoroughly and regularly assess the attainment and progress of individual children. They use effectively the information gained from observations and evaluations at the end of lessons to help them decide what needs to be taught next.
67. Outdoor accommodation is very good. It is very well resourced and provides a safe work environment for children. The recent addition of a music room has enhanced the indoor curriculum. This area is used effectively for dance and movement.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have very good opportunities to work with a wide range of art materials.
- Interesting role-play areas and drama help to stimulate children's imaginations.
- There are very thorough assessment procedures, although some individual targets are not specific enough.

Commentary

68. Children's attainment is good, with most children on target to exceed the expectations of the 'early learning goals' by the end of the Foundation Stage. All children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Good progress has been maintained since the time of the last inspection.
69. Children have very good opportunities for self-expression and for working independently because a very wide range of attractive art resources is freely available at all times. Children make choices about texture and colour as they make their own collage pictures and enjoy using the 'silky crayons' when drawing. During the inspection, a voluntary helper was utilised well to support children as they explored the properties of clay and made models.
70. As at the time of the last inspection, teaching is good. Members of staff provide good role models for imaginative play. For example, in the music room the acting headteacher supported children well as they acted out, and added sound effects to, a simple story about fast and slow vehicles. Outside, a nursery nurse helped children to make and use a pretend bus. Role-play areas are resourced well so that children's interest can be engaged and maintained. For example, a role-play airport outside helps children to learn about checking in baggage and waiting in a departure lounge before flights.

71. There are good resources to encourage children to take part in musical activities. For example, children have 'composed' simple songs by sequencing colours, and members of staff encourage them to follow these cards and to match the colours when playing the hand bells. Children maintain a steady beat when tapping their knees, and dance with ribbons in time with pre-recorded music. Older children are able to join in with simple question and answer songs. Parents have been particularly pleased with the way music has developed following the recent music projects.
72. There are very thorough procedures for monitoring the children's progress, although some of the targets set for individuals are too general to support planning effectively. The co-ordinator provides good leadership in planning for the subject, but has not had the opportunity to monitor teaching formally.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
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	2
Support, advice and guidance for children	2
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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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