

INSPECTION REPORT

THE LIMES NURSERY SCHOOL

Whitehall, Bristol

LEA area: City of Bristol

Unique reference number: 108905

Headteacher: Mrs Heather Churchill

Lead inspector: Mrs Alison Cogher

Dates of inspection: 8 – 10 November 2004

Inspection number: 268071

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery
School category:	Maintained
Age range of pupils:	3 to 4 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	105
School address:	Johnsons Road Whitehall Bristol
Postcode:	BS5 9AT
Telephone number:	0117 903 0317
Fax number:	0117 377 2364
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Clare Beckell
Date of previous inspection:	19 April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Limes Nursery School is situated on the edge of inner city Bristol in the Whitehall area. Most children start in the school in the September following their third birthday but the school also admits younger children if it has places. Children come from a wide variety of backgrounds and socio-economic circumstances, which are average overall. Over one third of children come from a range of minority ethnic groups, the main groups represented being from India and Pakistan. The main languages spoken in the homes of these children are Punjabi and Urdu. Twenty-four children receive specific help in learning English as an additional language and 15 are at the early stages of English language acquisition. There are 105 children on roll, all of whom attend part-time. Most children attend for a year before moving on to Reception classes in nearby schools. Few children start or leave the school at a time other than the normal admission time. The proportion of children with special educational needs is low, as is the number with Statements of Special Educational Needs. Attainment on entry to the school covers a wide range but is below average overall. The school is involved in a number of educational initiatives, runs courses for parents and encourages community use of its facilities. The school has been awarded Investor in People, a School Achievement Award and the Bristol Standard. The school is involved in early years courses and teacher training with Bath Spa University.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
24805	Alison Cogher	Lead inspector	Personal, social and emotional development Communication, language and literacy Mathematical development Special educational needs
12289	Susan Burgess	Lay inspector	
3586	Elizabeth Camplin	Team inspector	Knowledge and understanding of the world Physical development Creative development English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school providing good value for money. The very good leadership of the headteacher and very good teaching ensure that children achieve very well. Children thoroughly enjoy coming to school. They behave very well and have very positive attitudes to their work. Children benefit from a very good curriculum and are cared for and supported very well as individuals. The provision made for children with special educational needs is excellent. Children learning English as an additional language are supported very well. The school has excellent relationships with parents and is deservedly very well thought of in its locality.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The very good leadership and management of the headteacher ensure the school is focused on providing the best possible learning experiences for children.
- Very good teaching ensures that children learn and achieve very well.
- All staff and governors work very effectively a team.
- The school is very inclusive and very good use is made of assessment information to plan learning opportunities that are very well matched to children's needs.
- Links with parents are excellent and very supportive of children's learning.
- Provision for children with special educational needs is excellent.
- Children respond very positively to the support they receive and develop into confident, independent learners who work very hard.
- Relationships and the management of children are exceptionally good and the school cares for children very well.
- The school works very productively with the community.

The school has secured good improvement since the last inspection. Teaching and learning have improved, as has the quality of the curriculum and in particular the use made of the outdoor learning environment. Almost all issues from the last inspection have been addressed well although the involvement of co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning needs further development. Work in this area forms part of the school's current improvement plan.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Children's achievement is very good. Children learn quickly in all areas and most are likely to exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception in all areas of learning. The school is very inclusive. All staff work very hard to meet the individual needs of children of all abilities and social and ethnic backgrounds. Very effective use of skilful staff to support children with special educational needs results in these children making very good progress towards their targets. All staff support well the achievement of children learning English as an additional language. When these children are supported in their home language they achieve very well.

Children's personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. The school operates as a secure, friendly and harmonious community in which all children thrive. Children enjoy coming to school. They have very positive attitudes to their work and behave very well. Relationships between children are very good and often excellent between children and staff. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching by all staff is very good and, as a result, children learn very well. Staff work very effectively as a team and make very good use of assessment information and their knowledge of individual children to plan very well for children's needs. Children enjoy a very rich, interesting and wide variety of

experiences within a curriculum that is enriched by a very good range of visits and additional activities. Support for children with specific educational needs is exceptional. The good provision made for children learning English as an additional language ensures that they learn well, and very well when supported in their home language. The school embraces opportunities to develop the curriculum for the benefit of children. Children are cared for very well and all staff are skilled at listening to them and responding to their needs. The school works exceptionally well with parents as partners in their children's learning. Exceptionally good procedures ensure that children settle into school very quickly. Very productive links with the community benefit children and parents alike.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good.

The headteacher provides very strong leadership and manages the school well. She has a very clear vision for the development of the school. Leadership and management of other key staff are good overall, and very good in the area of special educational needs provision. Governance is good. The school complies with all statutory requirements. Teamwork is a strong feature of leadership, management and governance, with all involved committed to securing improvements in the provision for children and their parents.

PARENTS' AND CHILDREN'S VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents hold the school in extremely high regard and are happy about all areas of provision for their children. They are particularly happy about the effort made by the school to get to know their children as individuals and the arrangements made to help them settle confidently into school. Parents value highly the opportunities they have to be directly involved in their children's learning and the very good level of information they receive about their children's work and progress. There are no areas that they have concerns about. Children thoroughly enjoy their time at school and work hard.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

This very successful school has no major weaknesses. In this context the most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Continue to develop the role of co-ordinators in monitoring teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Further involve governors in monitoring the work of the school.
- Continue to pursue ways to secure support for all children in the school whose home language is not English.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY CHILDREN

Standards achieved in areas of learning

Children's achievement is very good in all areas of learning except physical development, where their achievement is good. The majority of children are likely to exceed the goals expected by the end of Reception in all areas. Children who have English as an additional language and whose home languages are Punjabi or Urdu achieve very well. The very few children who are the only speakers of their home language in the school achieve well. Children with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets set for them and their achievement is very good. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because assessment information is used very effectively to guide teaching.
- Children reach standards in all areas of learning that are above those expected for their age.
- Children at the early stages of learning English achieve particularly well when supported in their home language.
- Children with special educational needs achieve very well because the provision made for them is excellent.
- The school's involvement in the "Building Learning Power"¹ programme is supporting the raising of standards.

Commentary

1. Children have a wide range of skills and experiences when they start in the Nursery. Detailed assessments completed by the school show children's overall attainment on entry to be below that expected for their age. This is lower than that reported in the previous inspection. The school makes constant adjustments and improvements to the provision and teaching based on this assessment information, and by reviewing every three weeks the effectiveness of what has been taught. Teachers have a very good understanding of what children need to learn next and plan activities to ensure that their individual needs are met. Children achieve very well as a consequence of this very effective practice. The very good quality of education noted in the last inspection has been improved, particularly in the aspects of teaching and the curriculum. As a result, standards continue to be above those expected and children are likely to exceed the goals expected in all areas of learning by the end of Reception.
2. The school works hard to support all children as individuals and places a strong focus on teaching them to work alongside each other and to become confident and independent and good communicators. These skills are promoted strongly through the integration of the "Building Learning Power Programme" into the activities planned by teachers. A consequence of this work is that children develop very good learning habits such as perseverance and concentration, which are supporting the raising of achievement and standards in all areas of learning.
3. All staff work hard to develop children's communication, language and literacy skills and almost all children achieve very well in this area. Children with English as an additional

¹ The 'Building Learning Power Programme' aims to provide children with the skills they need to become effective learners by helping them develop skills such as concentration and perseverance. They are also helped to take responsibility for their learning by identifying what they have learned and what they need to do next.

language who are at the early stages of learning English are supported well. They make very good progress and achieve very well when given the additional help they need in their home

language. Children whose home language is Punjabi or Urdu receive this additional support. Children who are the only speakers of their home language in the school make good progress and achieve well because all staff work very hard to support them. The school is active in its efforts to secure regular home language support for these children.

4. The excellent provision made for children with special educational needs ensures that they achieve very well. Assessment is used very well to identify children's specific needs, to monitor their progress and plan activities that take their learning forwards. All staff are aware of children's particular needs and provide them with the help they need to make very good progress towards their individual targets. Additional support from specialists and the full involvement of parents contribute very well to the progress and achievement children make.

Children's attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Children have very positive attitudes towards the school and their behaviour is very good. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children work very hard and clearly enjoy the activities on offer at school.
- Behaviour is very good in classrooms and outside.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good.
- Children's personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well supported.

Commentary

5. Children settle into school quickly and happily, owing to excellent induction systems and the support that they receive from both staff and parents. Learning is fun and children are keen to be at school each day. They become fully absorbed in and clearly enjoy the extensive variety of activities that the school provides. Children show good levels of concentration and perseverance for their age. Children make very good relationships with each other and excellent relationships with the adults who teach and support them. In this very positive environment all children thrive, confident in the knowledge that they will be supported and listened to and their ideas taken into account.
6. Behaviour is very good both in the classrooms and in the outdoor areas. Staff have very high expectations of children's behaviour and manage them exceptionally well. Children respond very positively and are very tolerant of each other as they play amicably either together or alongside each other. They develop good levels of independence and are able to work well without direct adult supervision.
7. Each child is valued as an individual and staff have established very successfully a climate for learning that develops children's self-esteem and confidence. High emphasis is given to children's personal development. From the time they first come to school they are actively encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning by choosing the activities they will be involved in. Parents, carers or staff record these in children's individual learning diaries. These choices form the framework for children's learning that day, and are reviewed at the end of each session.

8. The school promotes children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively. Children are provided with many opportunities to initiate activities and there are frequent times during a session when they can exercise choice and learn to take responsibility. During review sessions, staff skilfully help children to share their experiences with other children and reflect on what they have learned. Children quickly learn what is right and wrong because staff provide them with the guidance they need and act as very good role models. Religious festivals of various faiths are celebrated throughout the year and this widens children's understanding and appreciation of other cultures and beliefs. During inspection week, for instance, staff, children and parents celebrated Diwali with songs, stories and special food.
9. Although not compulsory, attendance is good. In the few instances of poor attendance, the school analyses the adverse effect this has on the child's progress in general and especially on their emotional well-being. The school works sensitively with families to improve children's attendance when necessary. Punctuality is good, which allows time for children to plan their preferred activities each session. There have been no exclusions.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is very good.
- The breadth and richness of the curriculum is very good.
- Relationships and the level of care provided for children are very productive.
- There are excellent links with parents and the partnership with the community is very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff work very well as a team and have a very good understanding of all six areas of learning and how young children learn.
- Very good use is made of assessment information to guide teaching.
- The strong emphasis placed on developing children's personal, social, language and communication skills helps them to learn very well.
- Staff are very involved in children's play.
- Very good relationships and the excellent management of children enable children to learn very well.
- Children develop a good understanding of their own learning, and the skills they need to learn well.

Commentary

10. Teachers, Nursery nurses and support staff are very experienced and have a very good understanding of how children of all abilities can be helped to learn. They work very effectively as a team and all make an equally good contribution to the overall very good quality of teaching. Their knowledge of all six areas of learning is very good and this enables them to be very clear about what they want children to learn. An improvement since the last inspection is the identification of specific learning objectives as an integral part of the planning process. Activities are provided that children find very interesting. Consequently, children are strongly motivated, they concentrate well and persevere with tasks. Assessment information

is used particularly well to guide the planning of activities, and children's progress is monitored very closely. This, together with a comprehensive review every three weeks of what has been taught, enables staff to respond quickly to children's changing needs. Planning is modified to ensure that children of all abilities are both supported and challenged by adapting activities to meet their individual needs. Children with special educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English benefit from this very good practice as their specific needs are clearly identified and understood by all staff. They also receive the additional support they need to enable them to make very good progress towards their individual learning targets. This very good practice ensures that almost all children learn very well. The very few children who are the only speakers of their particular home language in the school learn well because all staff work hard to support them.

11. At the start of every session children plan the activities they will be involved in with the help of their parents, carers or staff. These are recorded in their learning diaries and reviewed through discussion daily. This practice helps children to take some responsibility for their learning and also to develop a good understanding of how they as individuals learn most effectively. Staff monitor these learning diaries to ensure children experience as wide a range of activities as possible. They also provide valuable additional assessment information that is used very well when planning future activities.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 20 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	10	9	0	0	0	0

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

12. Relationships in the Nursery are very good and staff have very high expectations of how children will behave. All staff act as extremely good role models for children and, as a result, children's behaviour is very good and they work very hard. Staff are quick to praise children for their efforts, however small the step in learning. Children are constantly engaged in conversation by staff, who also involve themselves fully in the activities chosen by children. A consequence of this high level of adult involvement is that children's personal and social skills improve very quickly, their vocabulary and knowledge in all six areas of learning are extended and they develop good communication skills. Children become confident, independent learners who have the ability to think for themselves, whilst also considering the needs of others. The school's integration of the "Building Learning Power" programme into the planning of activities is effective as it helps children to understand how they can learn well through the promotion of skills such as their ability to focus, concentrate and persevere.

The curriculum

Curricular provision is very good. It caters very well for children's interests and provides very good opportunities for enrichment. Children benefit from a good range of resources and good accommodation for learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's provision for children with special educational needs is excellent.
- Provision for children with English as an additional language is good, though access to support is better for some home languages than others.
- Innovative practice is a strong feature of curriculum development.
- The use of visits and visitors has a very strong impact on the quality of the curriculum.

Commentary

13. Staff have a wealth of knowledge about the Foundation Stage curriculum and how young children learn. They plan very thoroughly as a team and clearly identify what they expect children to learn from each activity. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. The school is very inclusive and staff put children's interests and needs firmly at the heart of curriculum planning. This supports children's very good achievement.
14. Children start school with a wide range of needs, some of which are complex and require considerable additional support. The school's record for meeting these needs is outstanding. The school is proactive in preparing for children's individual needs well in advance of their being admitted and liaises very closely with parents and outside support agencies. Parents and representatives of these agencies speak very highly of the school's provision. The co-ordinator conducts valuable research to identify how the school can meet children's specific needs. She shares her findings with all staff to ensure they are able to support children as individuals. When necessary, all staff complete special training and resources are adapted to provide equal access for children to all activities. One-to-one relationships between children and staff are excellent, and characterised by lots of conversation and feedback about success towards learning targets. The result is that children love learning and make rapid progress.
15. Approximately one quarter of children do not speak English as their home language. To cater effectively for them the school employs a member of staff who is fluent in Punjabi and Urdu. She works closely with all the children who are at an early stage of learning English. She provides valuable help with children's induction and support for their social, emotional and personal development. The school has evaluated its provision and knows that when children can communicate in their home language this accelerates their progress. The headteacher, staff and governors are very aware that more support is needed for children who speak other languages. The school's Ethnic Minority Action Plan sets out very appropriate aims to secure this additional support.
16. Teachers embrace new ideas. The "Building Learning Power" initiative, for example, is designed to promote children's capacity to learn effectively. It is having a very positive impact on helping children to take responsibility for their own learning. The school is also making increased use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support children's learning. This is proving to be successful as children reinforce their knowledge and understanding in areas such as mathematics through the use of computer programs and photographs taken with a digital camera.
17. There are very effective and imaginative opportunities for enriching the curriculum through the school's partnership with other organisations. For example, the school was successful in a "Cracking Mathematics Challenge" organised within the Bristol Education Action Zone. The work focused on investigating shape both improved children's knowledge of mathematics and won a special prize of working with a forester for the day in a local wood.
18. Accommodation is good and staff organise it very well to provide a bright, stimulating environment for learning. Access to outdoor facilities, even during wet weather, is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and allows for a wider and more balanced delivery of the curriculum. Practical resources are good and are used well to support very good learning. All staff are very well qualified and experienced and very capable of meeting the demands of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Children are very well cared for and supported. Relationships between children and staff are excellent and make a very effective contribution to children's learning. Induction arrangements are excellent. The school involves children very well through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are excellent relationships between children and adults.
- Children are very well supported, especially through monitoring of their personal development.
- Induction arrangements provide an excellent start to children's experience of school.
- The school provides a safe and secure learning environment.
- Children are involved very well in their own learning.

Commentary

19. Health and safety arrangements at the school are very good. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place and children are very well supervised in all learning environments.
20. The excellent trusting relationships between children and adults are a strong factor in the progress that children make. Children are happy to approach adults with any difficulties and respond readily to new suggestions. Personal development is monitored very well. Staff are sensitive to children's individual needs and are well aware of any particular issues which may affect their learning. The close and continuing contact with parents from the pre-entry home visit onwards ensures that the school is in a very good position to provide informed high quality care for children.
21. Induction arrangements are excellent. An initial home visit ensures that staff are well aware of families' circumstances, cultures and interests. Parents are then encouraged to attend with their child for an agreed, decreasing time during their first three days at school. In this way, children can gradually become familiar with staff and the school setting. The weekly Play and Stay sessions for parents and very young children provide a valuable opportunity for children to become familiar with the school prior to being admitted. From the outset, individual learning diaries are used very well to involve children in their own learning as they specify the activities they wish to be involved in each day. Staff take account of children's personal interests and aptitudes when deciding which of them would most benefit from educational outings.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are excellent. They are extremely well involved in their children's learning and very supportive of the work of the school. Links with the community are very good and there is good liaison with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very strong partnership between parents and the school has a very positive effect on children's learning and development.
- Parents receive a very good level of information about their children's work and progress.
- The school is a very well-established part of the local community.
- There are good links with other schools.

Commentary

22. Parents are delighted with the way in which the school cares for their children, helps them to learn and prepares them for the next stage of their education. All those who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire were confident that the school provided a good range of activities that their child finds interesting and enjoyable. All were also happy about the arrangements for children to settle into school. Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or concerns and consider they are well informed about how their children are

getting on. Parents are very supportive of the school and praise all aspects of its work. Many parents bring their children some distance each day to attend the school and this is a reflection of the confidence they have in the quality of education it provides. Inspectors support the positive views of parents.

23. Parents support the work of the school in practical ways such as accompanying trips, cooking and making costumes. This support is so strong that it often continues after parents no longer have a child at the school. Events such as celebrations of festivals, curriculum workshops and family social occasions are very well attended. A popular weekly parents'

group initiated by The Education Action Zone parent co-ordinator makes resources for the school and invites speakers on topics of general interest. The school actively encourages the involvement of parents in all aspects of its work.

24. Much information is exchanged informally at the beginning and end of sessions when staff, including the headteacher, talk to parents about how their children are getting on. There is a more formal, well-attended, opportunity to meet teachers in the spring term and parents receive a very detailed written report at the end of the summer term. Parents are directly involved in planning and reviewing their children's learning through their daily input into their learning diaries. Regular newsletters keep parents in touch with events at the school. These newsletters are translated into other languages as necessary for parents who do not speak English.
25. The school has very good links with the local community. Links are, for example, well-established with the local church and developing with a Childminder Support Group which meets on the premises each week. The school's high profile in the community is also due in part to its very active involvement in the Education Action Zone programme, which has promoted and funded a variety of projects. The school works to some acclaim with a range of significant partners. These include the Whitehall Day Nursery, with whom it undertakes joint training, and Bath Spa University, which regularly sends students on training places. The school works constructively with thirteen primary schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the future development of the school.
- All leaders are very good team builders and work collaboratively towards common goals.
- Co-ordinators make very effective use of data to evaluate children's achievement in three areas of learning. They share aspirations to monitor other areas of learning and aspects of the school's work equally well.
- Governors know the school well because they involve themselves in its work and provide good support.
- Procedures for recruitment, induction, deployment and retention of staff are very effective.

Commentary

26. The school's aims and objectives reflect its very strong commitment to the inclusion of all children. They are fully reflected in the school's welcoming atmosphere, the current work of the school and in the objectives identified in its improvement plan. Parents hold the school in

high esteem and the local education authority has also acknowledged the school's very good provision by awarding it the Bristol Standard.

27. Governors know the school well and fully understand its strengths and areas for further development. They are very well led, willing to take on board new responsibilities and are increasingly effective in their role of critical friend to the school. They monitor the work of the school, although they acknowledge this aspect of their role needs to be developed further to ensure that it is well structured and better focused on the school's current priorities. When appointing new staff, governors take great care to seek out people with the qualities and skills needed to strengthen the school team.
28. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and has successfully communicated her strong vision for improving provision at the school. She meets staff and governors regularly to share ideas for raising achievement and improving the care provided by the school. She listens to and acts on proposals made by staff and governors and she delegates responsibilities effectively. Collaborative teamwork is a strong feature of leadership and management in the school. Consequently, all the priorities in the school improvement plan have been agreed corporately and costed carefully, and manageable plans of action have been drawn up. Rigorous criteria are developed to evaluate the success of new initiatives. The school's recently published Racial Equality Action Plan is a very good example of this process in practice. Governors have added to the budget they receive from the local education authority to provide support for children in their home language to minimise any possible disadvantage for these children. Governors are striving to identify sources of additional support for all minority languages represented in the school. Their investment is helping to secure the very good achievement of children from these groups.
29. The headteacher works in close partnership with the senior teacher, who is also the very effective co-ordinator of provision for special educational needs. Other co-ordinators fulfil their current responsibilities for curriculum leadership and management well. All staff work collaboratively to gather data about children's learning in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and social and emotional development. This information is used very constructively to identify how well different groups of children achieve. Work is under way to produce similar data-gathering procedures for all other areas of learning. However, there are no consistent strategies in place for co-ordinators to formally monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their areas across the school. Teachers are currently working together to agree a new policy and guidance for monitoring the performance of colleagues.
30. The school's many long serving members of staff provide continuity of provision, which is very much appreciated by local families, and reflects the very good working environment of the school. New members of staff have all appreciated the very good induction they have received, which has enabled them to settle quickly and contribute effectively to the school community.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	7576
Total expenditure	239 544
Expenditure per child	2319 68

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	8274
Balance carried forward to the next year	17 086

31. The income and expenditure information in the table above relates to the financial year before the school took over full responsibility for its budget. The expenditure per child represents the local authority element of the school's funding per child. This, together with the delegated element of the school's budget indicated as total income, provides the total school expenditure for 2003 – 2004. These figures are calculated by referencing the authority's these figures don't make senses finance records for the school. The balance carried forward to the next year is part of the budget for 2004 – 2005 that has been fully delegated to the school for the first time. Governors and staff are developing a good grasp of their new budget responsibilities and apply the principles of best value well to the financial decisions they make.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for all children at the school is very well planned and organised. It provides a very secure base for them to become confident independent learners. Leadership and management in all six areas of learning are good, with very good features in teamwork and the way staff embrace innovation and change. The very good quality of education noted in the last inspection has been effectively maintained and developed.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children settle very quickly and happily because induction arrangements are excellent.
- Staff provide very good role models and manage children extremely well.
- Staff know the children very well and respond to their individual needs very successfully.
- Children develop very positive attitudes and the skills they need to learn very well.
- Children's self-esteem and racial harmony are promoted very well.

Commentary

32. Before children start school every effort is made to gather as much information as possible about every child. The school uses this information and works very closely with parents to provide children with the individual support they need to settle into the school very quickly. Children's enthusiasm for school is evident in the way they separate easily from their parents or carers at the start of each session and engross themselves immediately in one of the many activities on offer. As a consequence of their very positive start to school, children develop very quickly into enthusiastic learners. They achieve very well and are on course to exceed the expected goals by the end of Reception.
33. Relationships in the school are very good. Staff treat children and their parents with great courtesy and respect and are very good role models for developing these qualities in children. Children receive the support they need to gain confidence and develop good levels of independence because staff understand their individual needs. Children are managed exceptionally well by all staff, who are consistent in their approach based on praise and encouragement. This ensures that all children, including those with special educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English, learn to feel valued and develop good levels of self-esteem. The atmosphere in the school is one of calm, industrious harmony, in which children of all abilities and ethnic groups thrive.
34. Very good teaching encourages children to develop very good learning habits. Children are able to make decisions about which activities they will be involved in, and at the end of the day talk confidently about what they have learned. Very good use is made of assessment information to plan activities that are firmly based on children's own personal experiences and what they have already achieved. The involvement of staff in these activities helps children to learn how to play co-operatively together, to concentrate for extended periods of time and to persevere with tasks they find challenging. The "Building Learning Power" programme supports their learning of these skills, which they use to support their very effective learning in other areas of the curriculum. As children experience success and enjoyment in all that they do they develop a very positive attitude to their work and behave very well.

35. All staff make a significant contribution to the school's very good provision in this area of learning. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the provision and works collaboratively with all staff to improve it further. Focused monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning have been identified as an area needing improvement. Staff are developing collectively agreed procedures to enable this to happen effectively.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong focus on developing children's speaking and listening skills.
- Very good use is made of assessment information to plan activities that children find interesting and relevant.
- Children learning English make particularly good progress when supported in their home language.
- The school provides a rich literary environment and reading and writing are promoted well through children's play.

Commentary

36. Children achieve very well in this area of learning and are on course to exceed the goals expected by the end of Reception. Teaching is very good and takes full account of what children already know and can do. Assessment information is used very well to plan activities that will motivate children of all abilities and successfully take their learning forwards. As children play, adults engage them in conversation and make very effective use of questioning to encourage children to talk about their learning. Staff listen very carefully to children, who in turn learn to listen attentively to staff and each other. Staff sensitively correct children's speech when necessary, model correct speech very well and pursue every opportunity to extend children's vocabulary in all areas of learning. The consequence of this interaction is that children develop the ability to think through problems, give reasons for their actions and communicate effectively with adults and each other.
37. The school's commitment to the inclusion of all children is very well demonstrated in this area of learning. Children with special educational needs achieve very well because, when appropriate, they are provided with very high quality individual support. All staff are aware of these children's specific needs and give them the help and encouragement they need to meet their individual targets. Children who are learning English, as an additional language achieve well overall and very well when supported in their home language. The school works hard to provide this additional help for all children at the early stages of learning English although it has found it difficult to secure regular support in some of the languages represented in the school.
38. The school environment promotes the learning of reading and writing through extensive labelling of displays and providing children with many opportunities to incorporate mark making and the use of books in their play. This is particularly evident in children's role-play where they frequently write lists and letters, and use the reading of books as part of the story they are acting out. Through their play in classrooms and outside children see the relevance of learning these skills and are keen to learn more. Staff model writing well and through their involvement in children's play they help them to understand the links between the spoken and written word. Children learn that letters have names and make sounds and they work hard to form letters correctly and write complete words. Children's interest and enthusiasm for reading is reflected in the way they listen attentively to stories, join in with those they know well and handle books with care. The school possesses a range of dual language books,

which are used well to support children learning English as an additional language and also to help other children appreciate the ethnic and cultural diversity represented in the school.

39. All staff work collaboratively to continually evaluate the provision in this area of learning. They share their experiences and expertise and the co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the provision overall. To enhance her knowledge of the provision further staff are developing an agreed strategy to enable the quality of teaching and learning to be monitored and evaluated objectively.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with extensive opportunities to develop their mathematical skills and understanding.
- Children confidently use mathematical vocabulary.
- Digital photography and computer programs are used well to reinforce children's mathematical development.

Commentary

40. Very good teaching ensures children learn and achieve very well in this area and the majority of children are likely to exceed the expected goals by the end of Reception. Assessment information is used very well to guide the planning of a very wide range of learning opportunities that successfully take children's learning forwards. The majority of these opportunities are integrated very well into children's play activities and, as a result, children's learning in mathematics has relevance. For example, when involved in home-based role-play children cut food into the correct number of pieces to enable everyone to have a share. Children's learning of counting and number recognition is reinforced through everyday tasks, songs, rhymes and playing games. For example, at fruit and milk time each day children count how many are present and give out the correct number of pieces of fruit. Children are encouraged to write numbers as they record, for example, the score in a cricket match, or the number of potatoes dug from the garden.
41. Staff are very skilled at helping children to concentrate and persevere and they pursue every opportunity to extend children's mathematical vocabulary through involvement in their play. For example, as children play in water with a variety of containers, staff help them to understand and use words such as "full" and "empty". Children learn to recognise and name shapes such as circles, squares and triangles. In their creative work they use this knowledge to create pictures and patterns and consequently develop a good understanding of space and how shapes fit together. Photographs taken with a digital camera are used very well to record children's learning from local visits and from activities that cannot otherwise be saved. For example, children identify how numbers are used on houses, post boxes and bus stops. Their work exploring symmetry using coloured transparent shapes and a light box are similarly recorded. Recording work in this way is very beneficial as the photographs are used to stimulate mathematical discussions during review times, and for displays that enable children to revisit and reinforce their learning at a later date.
42. Children use computer programs well to reinforce their counting and number recognition. At this early stage of the school year some children need support in accessing the programs for themselves. However, once they understand how the programs work they respond to them with confidence and focus well on the counting activities they provide. Through working with a wide variety of construction materials children learn to solve real problems. For example, they construct a bridge for the "Three Billy Goats" from blocks. They use their knowledge of

how the blocks fit securely together to ensure that the bridge is strong enough to carry the weight of the goats. Good leadership and management of the area ensure that the school is continually striving to improve provision in this area. Strategies to formally monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning are being developed.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because teaching is very good.
- Children learn very quickly because they are encouraged to observe, explore, use tools and investigate the world around them.
- Children's love of learning is reflected in their very positive attitudes and behaviour.
- The curriculum is of high quality and builds very effectively on children's interests.

Commentary

43. By the end of Reception children are likely to exceed the goals expected in this area. They make especially good progress in the foundations of science, technology and ICT. Children observe materials and creatures closely, and notice and compare their special features. One small group, for example, examined the casings around different kinds of seeds and noted the shiny surface of kidney beans. Children use a mouse competently to explore simple computer programs and are beginning to understand how a camera is used to provide visual images of people or events in their lives. The very good range of activities enables children to experience using a wide variety of tools for shaping materials. They learn new skills very quickly because staff provide them with very good guidance.
44. The overall achievement of children from the school's broad range of social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds is very good. Children from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as other children. Children at an early stage of learning English learn and achieve particularly well when supported in their home language. Children with special educational needs achieve very well as they benefit from access to appropriate resources that give them access to all activities and extend their knowledge of the world around them.
45. Very good teaching is characterised by the depth of teachers' knowledge and understanding of this area and their very good knowledge of children's individual needs. Children learn very well because relationships with staff are excellent. They enjoy the freedom to investigate independently and respond positively to the encouragement and support given to them by staff if they experience difficulties. As a result, children are always confident and eager to participate. They develop an appreciation and respect for their environment and living things. For example, they handle worms carefully when digging in the garden and return them to their natural habitat when they have finished observing them. Teachers frequently make the most of children's natural curiosity. Questions such as "Can you see how the worm stretches his body as he moves along?" extend children's powers of observation and understanding of how creatures move.
46. The curriculum is broad and exciting. It often involves visits or visitors that extend children's knowledge imaginatively. For example, when recalling a recent visit to a local wood, children spoke enthusiastically of learning from a forester how to make a safe bonfire from sticks and leaves. Good facilities and resources inside and outside classrooms support learning well. Use of the outside environment has improved since the last inspection, as even during wet weather the large covered area gives children regular access to a wide range of relevant, stimulating activities. There are very good opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's work at the start of each session. For example, parents and children frequently sit

together to try out programs involving counting or painting on a computer. This enhances learning in the foundations of ICT and other areas of learning.

47. Good leadership and management ensure that the area is continually being improved. Relationships between staff are very good and the co-ordinator encourages them all to use their special talents and interests to enhance the provision, as in woodwork. Staff work very well as a team to identify how to improve the provision for different groups of children. This work resulted in changes being made to provide more activities that appealed to boys as well as girls. As a result, boys improved their ability to sustain concentration and complete a task. The school's current focus on collecting, recording and interpreting data about what individual children can do in relation to ICT is enabling teachers to identify the next small steps in learning children need to make.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make very effective use of resources to encourage children to try hard for sustained periods and to work independently in pairs or small groups.
- Children really enjoy rigorous physical activities and respect adults' insistence on high standards of behaviour to secure their safety and well-being.
- The very good curriculum promotes healthy physical development.
- The school is active in its commitment to continually improving provision in this area.

Commentary

48. Children are likely to exceed expected goals by the end of Reception in this area of learning. They move around the school safely and confidently as they select and engage in activities because staff ensure children have been taught and understand the safety rules. Children have good control of their bodies. They climb the stairs to the upstairs classroom independently and are able to avoid bumping into each other when they dance in time to a favourite song or use bikes and prams in the outdoor play areas. Children are developing ball control skills and work co-operatively with a partner when playing ball games. For example, two boys were able to roll a large ball backwards and forwards to each other across a picnic table with a good degree of accuracy. Many children demonstrate good control of small tools as they cut fabric and different types of paper to create collage pictures. Children's completed work on display in the school shows their broad experience of cutting and shaping and handling tools. Higher-attaining children are able to control a pencil to write letters and words.
49. Children's enthusiastic involvement in all aspects of this area of learning contributes very well to their personal, social, cultural and emotional development. All children achieve equally well because of the encouragement they receive from staff. For example, a child with special educational needs made considerable progress when talked through the skills of driving a toy car, and a child at an early stage of learning English persevered with learning to use a paintbrush to mix water with paint powder after being carefully shown how to do it.
50. Teaching and learning are good overall and very good when teachers work directly with one child or a small group to extend their skills. For example, under the guidance of a member of staff a child made very good progress in learning to control a small ball with a hockey stick. Although attention to safety is rigorous, staff are not restrictive. They foster independence and, as a result, children are able to manage their own play safely for extended periods of time.

51. Leadership and management are good, with several very good features. For example, all staff share a strong aspiration to enable children to enjoy physical exercise and to develop a healthy lifestyle and good control over small objects. They are constantly looking for ways to improve provision. To support this work they have embarked on research to find out how they can improve the way they monitor, measure and record how well children progress and the effectiveness of the activities provided.
52. Good improvement has been secured in this area of learning since the last inspection as standards have been maintained and much better use is made of the outdoor area even when it is wet. This is possible because the school has invested in a large waterproof cover for the playground which is providing good value for money.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and assessment are very good.
- Many children manage their own learning effectively when working independently.
- The quality and range of the curriculum are very good.
- The school works closely with parents and the community to provide opportunities that reflect children's different cultures and backgrounds.

Commentary

53. By the end of Reception children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals expected in this area. Children demonstrated particularly good skills when making and responding to music, creating pictures and models and communicating through imaginative play.
54. All children achieve very well. Very good learning results from very good teaching. Planning of activities is sufficiently flexible to allow children to exercise choice as well as to work directly with staff. Children are given lots of time, space and resources to develop their imaginative play, explore different media and engage in music activities. Staff explain new skills clearly, and provide children with the encouragement they need to persevere with tasks they find difficult. For example, one child was thrilled as his control of scissors improved as he learned to position his finger and thumb correctly, which enabled him to cut out a label for his painting. Children at the early stages of learning English learn a significant amount of new vocabulary as they listen to staff and other children when making things together. English speaking children also learn to enjoy the sound and rhythm of other languages, as, for example, they listen to and learn to sing a Nursery rhyme in Punjabi.
55. Teamwork and working with educational partners are strong features of leadership and management in this area. All staff have a very good understanding of how this area helps foster children's confidence, imagination and empathy for others. Together they embrace new ideas and opportunities, such as those funded by the Education Action Zone. For example, the school participated in a music event, and new dressing up clothes were made by the Parents' Group. Formal systems for checking the outcomes of teaching and learning are currently being developed. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. Above expected standards have been maintained overall and are higher than previously reported in the foundations of music.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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