

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WINGATE NURSERY SCHOOL**

Wingate, County Durham

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 113971

Headteacher: Mrs Paddy Beels

Lead inspector: Mrs K Charlton

Dates of inspection: 4 - 5 July 2005

Inspection number : 268278

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 – 5 years
Gender of children:	Mixed
Number on roll:	74
School address:	Partridge Terrace Wingate County Durham
Postcode:	TS28 5BD
Telephone number:	01429 838206
Fax number:	01429 838206
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Margaret Greener
Date of previous inspection:	30 June 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Wingate Nursery is situated in the village of Wingate. There are high levels of social and economic deprivation in the area. There are 74 children on roll who attend on a part-time basis. The nursery has six places designated for children with special educational needs and it provides a special educational needs outreach service for other nearby nurseries. Currently, six children in the nursery have statements and a high percentage receive support from a range of outside agencies. The children's special needs are mainly associated with learning difficulties and social and emotional difficulties. Virtually all children are of white British origin and none speak English as an additional language. Most spend one year in the nursery; a few spend over a year if places are available. The children come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. Their attainment on entry is very wide ranging but overall is low. It is very low in communication language and literacy, and mathematical development. In recent years the nursery has developed a 'Woodland School' in a nearby forested area. This is used every Friday by groups of children. Plans are well underway for the development of the nursery as a Children's Centre. It will incorporate the Family Centre, that is currently on the same site, and a Training and Research Base. This major development is due to start during the 2005 Summer holiday.

The nursery has a high level of involvement with local and national initiatives. It gained Beacon School status in 2001 and since then has worked with many other schools across a wide range of Local Authorities giving both support and advice. The staff deliver key note speeches and run workshops at local and national conferences on a regular basis. The nursery gained the National Artworks Award in 2002 and it was named as the Early Years Setting of the Year in the same year. In 2003 and 2004 it gained School Achievement Awards. The nursery holds the Investor in People Award and has gained Celebrating Success Awards from Durham Education Authority every year since 2001. The headteacher was awarded an OBE in 1999 for her contribution to education and also has a National Teaching Award for her work with Parents in the Community.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1718	Kay Charlton	Lead inspector	Communication, language and literacy Knowledge and understanding of the world Physical development
19365	Gordon Stockley	Lay inspector	
1516	Michael Warman	Team inspector	Special educational needs Personal, social, emotional development Mathematical development Creative development

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Wingate Nursery School makes excellent provision for its children.** Teaching and learning are outstanding and the children make excellent progress. From a low starting point on entry children are on course to attain or exceed the standards expected for their age by the time they leave. The leadership of the headteacher is of the highest quality. The nursery gives excellent value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children of different abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve exceptionally well.
- Children flourish because the nursery takes full account of their individual needs.
- The very strong staff team makes learning fun and at every opportunity challenges children in their thinking.
- The headteacher, staff and governors show passionate commitment to the nursery's aims and its future improvement.
- Very high levels of care are provided and children learn in a safe and secure environment.
- The curriculum is very rich and children are actively involved in stimulating learning experiences.
- Links with parents and the community are excellent and make a significant contribution to children's learning.
- The reporting of whole school self-evaluation is not sufficiently analytical or concise.

The nursery has made very good improvement since the last inspection in 1999. It has built on its considerable strengths. The quality of teaching has improved as have children's achievements. The curriculum has improved, particularly with the development of the 'Woodland School'. The resources for information and communication technology, and those for climbing and balancing are much improved. The nursery has developed very comprehensive self-evaluation procedures.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

**Children's achievements, including those children with special educational needs, are excellent in all areas of learning.** From a particularly low baseline in the areas of communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development girls and boys make significant gains and are on course to attain the standards expected for their age. In personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development they are on course to exceed the expected standards. **Children's personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding.** Children grow in confidence and independence during their time at nursery.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education is outstanding. Teaching is excellent, resulting in highly effective learning.** Staff have the highest expectations of all children, including those who have special educational needs, and they work to the principle that given the chance then every child 'can fly'. The staff are very experienced in teaching young children and have a high level of expertise in many areas, for example in art, music and information and communication technology. They are particularly successful in building on children's own ideas and enthusiasms. They work extremely well as a team. They make learning fun and have the confidence to enhance children's learning by using spontaneous situations to advantage. The quality of their questioning to extend children's thinking is a considerable strength. They continually ask children to think and to try to solve problems for themselves. Staff encourage children's skills in speaking and listening extremely well. It is noticeable how well they listen to what the children have to say. The ways in which staff use assessment is exemplary. They carefully analyse every step of each child's progress and achievement and ensure that future activities are matched to their level of understanding. The curriculum is outstanding. It is thoroughly planned and a wide range of rich and varied learning

experiences are provided. Visits out of the nursery, including the weekly visits to the Woodland School, are used very well indeed to enhance the programme. There is a high emphasis on personal, social and health education and an also in helping to create 'successful citizens of the future'. Children with special educational needs are supported exceptionally well so that they make excellent progress. The accommodation is very good and resources are excellent. Staff provide high levels of care and welfare so that the children learn in a safe and secure environment. The nursery has very good links with other schools and an excellent partnership with parents.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Overall leadership and management of the nursery are outstanding.** Everyone pulls together to create a highly successful nursery. The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and sets an excellent example in her own teaching. She expects the best of children and staff and achieves this in an atmosphere of mutual care and respect. The nursery embodies the principle that everyone is a learner and all staff actively pursue their own professional development. They are very enthusiastic about their work, very reflective and are passionate about providing the best since children have only one chance. They are totally committed to the future improvement of the nursery. Staff carry out their roles and responsibilities in a very efficient and effective way and the nursery is managed extremely well on a day-to-day basis. Governors are very supportive and they work extremely well with the headteacher. The governing body is very well organised and ensures that all statutory responsibilities are met. Governors have very good procedures in place to ensure that the budget is managed effectively. The nursery's performance management programme is working very well. Along with a range of other monitoring activities this provides comprehensive information about the overall effectiveness of the nursery. The way in which this information is reported, however, is not sufficiently analytical or concise especially with the increased emphasis on this in the recently revised inspection arrangements. The nursery has highlighted this as an area in need of improvement.

## **PARENTS' AND CHILDREN'S VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents hold the nursery in the highest regard. Virtually all completed a questionnaire prior to the inspection and these show one hundred per cent support for the nursery and its work. Children are clearly proud of their nursery and are looking forward to sharing some of their achievements in the graduation ceremony which takes place shortly before they leave.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

There are no significant areas in need of improvement although the nursery recognises the need to:

- Develop a more analytical and concise way of reporting the outcomes of its own self-evaluation.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY CHILDREN**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning**

Children achieve extremely well in all areas of learning and overall are on target to reach the standards expected for their age by the time they leave the nursery. They are on course to attain above the expected standards in many areas of learning.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children of different abilities, including those with special educational needs and also those who are more able, achieve extremely well in all areas of learning.
- In personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development they are on course to exceed the expected standards.
- From a particularly low starting point in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical development, children are on course to attain the expected standards for their age.

#### **Commentary**

1. The nursery provides a very inclusive learning environment and ensures equality of opportunity for all. All staff are extremely thorough in assessing the needs of children of very different abilities so that learning is carefully matched to their needs. In this way each child achieves of their very best. Children with special educational needs receive a high level of support and achieve and often exceed the targets set out in their Individual Education Plans. Overall, they make exceptionally good progress. More able children are suitably catered for and achieve their potential. In all areas of learning, girls and boys achieve equally well.
2. Particularly high priority is given to children's personal, social and emotional development. Children settle quickly in the welcoming atmosphere and show high levels of confidence in the procedures and routines. They form excellent relationships. Their social skills are very effectively developed and they work and play together happily. Children learn to be independent and they are confident to make choices about the activities they will undertake. The strong focus given to this area forms a firm foundation for all other areas of learning.
3. In the area of knowledge and understanding of the world, children develop early skills in investigation, problem solving and in the use of information and communication technology particularly well. In the creative area, they show very advanced skills in using a wide range of materials to create their own pictures and models, such as the drawings of the recently hatched ducklings and the wooden models of different animals. Children also show good understanding of the ways in which different musical instruments are played. They know a wide repertoire of songs and sing alongside a member of staff who plays the accordion with a good sense of rhythm. In the area of physical development, children show high levels of motivation. They demonstrate good levels of co-ordination and control for example when pulling buckets of water and sand up and down the newly installed climbing apparatus, climbing along a rope like spider-man and also when dancing to Mexican music.
4. In communication, language and literacy, children benefit from the consistently high expectations set by the staff. Excellent support is provided for those children who are less confident or have special educational needs and, as a result, all groups achieve of their best. The children learn to listen well in small and large group situations. They particularly grow in confidence in the development of their skills in speaking and listening and use talk effectively as they work alongside each other. The children not only learn to listen to each other very well but the more able are also good at asking questions of each other, for example asking about how it felt to see a witch on a recent visit one of the children had made to Disney Land.



Early reading skills are developed extremely well. The children listen to interesting stories with delight and learn to join in as they recognise familiar or repeated phrases or sentences. Most concentrate very well on the pictures, words and on the explanations which teachers provide. More able children are challenged and recognise a good range of familiar words. Children of different abilities develop a good awareness of the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they make. They make significant gains in early writing. They are confident to make marks and pretend to write. Staff encourage the children to write their names and most make good attempts at doing this for their age. More able children write their name and sometimes other words, for example when writing about a recent visit to the seaside, showing suitable attempts at letter formation.

5. In the area of mathematical development, the children acquire early counting skills well and make good use of mathematical language. They learn to count to ten and beyond and to recognise numerals to five and then up to ten. They are challenged particularly well to develop skills of problem solving and estimation. The children establish good understanding about shape, space and measure. Opportunities to help children appreciate ideas such as 'one more and one less', 'two more and two less' and 'how many altogether?' are used to advantage. For example, when working out how many ducklings were left in the nursery after most had been returned to their natural habitat.
6. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection .

### **Children's attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Children's attitudes are excellent and their behaviour is very good. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is excellent.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The staff team has created a stimulating climate for learning and children show extremely positive attitudes.
- The nursery's positive approach to behaviour management works effectively and ensures children behave very well.
- Children work and play together happily and relationships are excellent.
- The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.

### **Commentary**

7. Children's attitudes are excellent and their behaviour is very good. These continue to be strong features from the time of the last inspection. The children enjoy coming to the nursery and show high levels of enthusiasm for the activities provided. They concentrate for sustained periods, for example when drawing pictures of different sorts of fish and when making models with very high towers. Behaviour is very good, and this is confirmed by parents' comments. There is a positive behaviour policy that is operated consistently by staff and any instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with quickly. There is a strong emphasis on helping children appreciate how others feel if there are any disagreements and in this way children learn to appreciate their responsibilities to others. The small number of children who find self-discipline difficult make significant gains in their behaviour during their time at nursery.
8. The staff value each child as an individual and relationships are excellent. Staff build children's confidence and self-esteem and create a climate where children work and play together happily. Children respond very positively to the high expectations of staff and develop very good levels of personal responsibility. Each day children take responsibility for planning out their own tasks and then at the end of sessions very effectively review their own learning as well as that of others. Parents greatly appreciate the values expected by the nursery.

9. Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. By providing activities that help children appreciate the wonders of the world, staff encourage them to develop very good understanding for their age. For example, during the inspection the children showed a very real sense of wonder when they realised that the painted lady butterflies they were watching had once been caterpillars. On another occasion, all sat in rapt silence when a very quiet child who clearly found it difficult sang an almost inaudible solo to the whole group. They are taught right from wrong and are given clear moral direction. All adults in the nursery act as very good role models and explain very well the difference between what is right and what is wrong. There are many opportunities for children to exercise choice and they learn to do this very well indeed.
10. Children's social development is excellent. They develop a real sense of empathy with others and they are encouraged very well to develop a sense of pride in their own individual backgrounds as well as those of others. This was very evident in the work they undertook about the tsunami disaster. Children learn very well from the different people who visit the nursery. They benefit from the wide range of activities that help them to understand about different cultures. The particularly good provision in music supports children's cultural development very well especially when they play the nursery's exciting range of musical instruments from different parts of the world. The nursery prepares children very well for living in a multicultural society.

### **Attendance**

11. Since children in the nursery are below statutory school age there are no expected norms for attendance. The nursery encourages very good attendance and makes every effort to ensure that children establish good patterns of attendance by the time they go to school. Children are rarely absent and the vast majority arrive punctually, eager to start work on the exciting range of activities that the staff have prepared for them.

### **Exclusions**

12. There have been no exclusions.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The overall quality of education is outstanding. Teaching and learning, assessment and the curriculum are all excellent. The quality of care, guidance and support and the nursery's partnership with parents are also excellent. Resources are of the highest quality and accommodation is very good.

### **Teaching and learning**

The overall quality of teaching is outstanding and, as a result, children's learning is also outstanding. Assessment is of the highest order.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The strong team of staff have the highest expectations of all children.
- Children with special educational needs receive excellent support.
- Staff provide imaginative and motivating activities so that children's learning is fun.
- A particular strength is the way they build on children's own ideas and experiences.
- Meticulous assessments of children's learning and progress are undertaken. They are used very effectively so that staff are able to challenge children in their thinking.

### **Commentary**

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 21 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
19	2	0	0	0	0	0

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

13. Teaching and learning are outstanding. None of the teaching seen was less than very good. This is a noticeable improvement since the previous inspection.
14. The staff have a very secure knowledge of the ways in which young children learn and they plan in detail so that children are able to achieve of their best. They have a high level of expertise in a wide range of areas; for example one member of staff is also a professional photographer and she makes a particularly valuable contribution to the exemplary work undertaken in recording and analysing children's achievements. Staff are very encouraging and good humoured in their conversations with the children and excellent dialogue occurs throughout the day. They expect the most of each child and emphasise that they should solve problems for themselves. Open-ended questions, such as 'Have you any ideas about what will happen next?' are used especially well to move children's learning on and challenge them in their thinking. The quality of teaching is underpinned by close, very supportive relationships and in this atmosphere children respond very well indeed to the high expectations of the staff showing increasing levels of concentration in their learning.
15. All children are considered to be very important members of the nursery community and close attention is given to ensuring that children with special educational needs make progress. Staff work in partnership with parents and outside agencies to draw up Individual Education Plans that are very well matched to the children's needs and ensure success in learning. There is a well thought out balance of individual and group work and a positive strategy of working to each child's strengths. For example, a child who is good at number work and in using information and communication technology thoroughly enjoyed playing a game where he controlled a programmable toy to go forwards and backwards to different numbered squares. He was totally motivated by the game and delighted to practise letter sounds that he might otherwise have found difficult, because they were written inside small boxes linked to each square in the game.
16. Learning is enjoyable and children have fun. Parents appreciate this and say that children do not want to leave at the end of sessions. Wonderful learning experiences are organised. Good examples include working with Daisy and Derek duck to find out what they like to eat, creating rivers and channels in the sand pit for toy dinosaurs to move along, reading and writing books about rainbow fish and projecting photographs that the children have only just taken onto the inter-active whiteboard. Each Friday groups of children go to the 'Woodland School' and take part in a wide range of activities, including using maps to find their way around, observing animal life in a stream and also in the undergrowth. Days like these often include a barbecue prepared and organised by the children.
17. Staff are adept at building on the children's own ideas and also at turning spontaneous situations into positive learning experiences. This increases children's motivation and adds to the quality of their learning. For example, recent work of outstanding quality resulted from children's play about pirates and their treasure. Both the written work and the artwork that has been produced is of such high quality it is intended that much of this will be mounted in the entrance to the new Children's Centre. Similarly a child who came into one session dressed as spider-man was used as the impetus for some very good work in reading, drawing and climbing 'spider-man style'.
18. Assessment is exemplary. Staff make observations, take copious notes and continually take photographs and video footage of the children as they go about their activities. All of this documentary evidence is studied in detail to give recognition to each child's achievements and then help them improve. Much of the training that staff deliver to other institutions uses this very detailed assessment to study the quality and effectiveness of children's learning. There

are very clear systems for recording children's achievements against the 'stepping stones'. The assessment of children with special educational needs is of a very high quality and is used very well indeed to plan out the next small steps in their learning.

## **The curriculum**

Provision is excellent.

## **Main Strengths and Weaknesses**

- Excellent provision is made for children's personal, social, emotional development, health education and citizenship.
- High emphasis is placed on developing children's skills in communication, language and literacy and mathematical skills.
- There is a very strong commitment to providing for children with special educational needs.
- The nursery provides a very wide range of enrichment for children.
- Resources are excellent and particularly good use is made of the outdoor environment.

## **Commentary**

19. The nursery provides a very wide range of interesting and enjoyable activities that promote the early learning goals in all six areas of learning and very effectively engage children in their learning. All children have equal access to the curriculum and they are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
20. High priority is given to children's personal, social and emotional development. They also learn very effectively about health education and citizenship. The excellent routines and structures within the nursery result in the particularly good level of responsibility that the children take for their own learning. Staff build up excellent relationships with the children who show increasing confidence and emotional security in the secure surroundings provided. The excellent relationships that exist between staff and children ensure that children learn trust and that their views or concerns are treated sensitively. At all times healthy lifestyles are encouraged. A particularly important contribution was the 'Fit 4 Life' week during the year which involved everyone in the family. A key feature of the nursery's work is to build citizens of the future and it places a high emphasis on children learning about both rights and responsibilities.
21. Communication, language and literacy is given a very high profile so that there is significant improvement in children's basic skills. Very good strategies are used to help children develop good listening and speaking skills. This benefits all children but especially those with special educational needs. All aspects of mathematics are developed very systematically. The provision for children with special educational needs is excellent and the requirements of the Code of Practice are fully met. All staff show a very strong commitment to the principles set out in the nursery's very clear aims concerned with equality of opportunity and inclusion.
22. There is a very wide range of enrichment activities. Many visits out of the nursery take place. For example, very good use is made of the locality with visits to the local park, building site and other places of interest such as the seaside. The nursery has been very far sighted in setting up the 'Woodland School' as a means of fully engaging children who need extra challenge and support particularly in the areas of social and emotional development, and physical development. This also gives the children an outstanding introduction to environmental education. A very wide range of visitors into the nursery, for example, artists, musicians and people who work in the local community such as the police service, also help to broaden the curriculum.
23. Resources are excellent and they are very well organised so that children can make choices about those they wish to use. There is a very good level of staffing to meet the needs of the

children in the nursery. The accommodation is very good. Even though space is at a premium the accommodation provides a highly stimulating learning environment. Particularly good use is made of the outside area which has been very imaginatively planned to provide children with excellent opportunities to learn, investigate and develop their physical skills.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The nursery provides excellent care, support and guidance for all its children. Children's views and preferences are listened to very well, valued, and acted upon where appropriate.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good induction arrangements ensure that the children settle quickly and establish a sense of well-being.
- The level of support and guidance, based on monitoring of the children's personal and academic progress, is excellent

### **Commentary**

24. All staff work very hard to make certain that the children are safe and well cared for in every aspect of the nursery's work. Health and safety has a high profile and children are taught to work out the risks involved in any activity for themselves. As a consequence there are very few accidents. The site is secure and there is a high level of supervision at all times. Nothing is left to chance; for example, even though the exit door locks are at a high level, a member of staff is always on duty at home-time to ensure that all children leave in the charge of a responsible adult. All necessary safety checks and risk assessments have been carried out. Staff are careful to ensure children's safety when visiting the 'Woodland School'. They receive regular training in child protection matters. The buildings and grounds are cleaned and maintained to a very high standard by the caretaker who is a valued member of the team. Children learn about personal hygiene, such as washing their hands before eating or after handling play equipment, and the importance of healthy eating is emphasised and encouraged.
25. Parents very much appreciate the care taken to prepare children for starting school. The very good induction procedures, including home visits, high quality information and daily contact with and support for parents and carers help the children to settle quickly and easily into nursery routines. Excellent relationships are quickly established between children and staff and in this warm and welcoming atmosphere the children feel safe and secure. All the children have a named 'key worker' and know who to go to if they are worried or upset.
26. There is an extremely thorough system for assessing and tracking each child's progress in relation to the 'stepping stones' in all areas of learning. Each child's 'key worker' keeps particular note of the progress of individual children in their group. This information is used very well indeed to inform parents of the next steps in children's learning and to help children also play an active part in their own learning. Children's views are constantly taken account of, for example when they are asked to make decisions about safety issues as they walk up to the 'Woodland School'.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The nursery's partnership with parents is excellent. Links with the community are exceptional and links with other schools are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are very supportive of the nursery and appreciate what it does for their children.
- The nursery provides excellent information for parents about their children's work and progress.

- Excellent links with the community make an outstanding contribution to the children's educational experiences.

### **Commentary**

27. The nursery is extremely effective in gaining support from parents. The welcome is very warm within a relaxed friendly atmosphere and parents are left in no doubt that their co-operation and support is not only expected but vital. Parents appreciate the opportunity to talk to staff at the beginning and end of each session. They speak of the headteacher and staff in glowing terms and are clearly very proud of the nursery and delighted that their children have the opportunity to attend. Many parents demonstrate their pleasure and enthusiasm for the nursery by helping in a range of different ways. They run a weekly shop selling paper, pencils and other materials to support their children's learning at home. Some parents work on a rota basis to cook the weekly mid-day 'Supersnack' meal, where staff and children sit at tables in family groups, sharing a meal and enjoying conversation about what they have been doing at school or elsewhere.
28. Parents are extremely well supported by the excellent information provided by the nursery. A notice in the entrance explains clearly and simply the main themes for the week so that parents know what their children will be learning about. Regular daily and termly discussions provide parents with high quality information about their children's activities, learning and progress. There are also a number of formal opportunities during the year for parents to have a face-to-face discussion with staff about their children's progress. These discussions are supplemented by a written report towards the end of the academic year. The reports are of high quality and confirm that staff know the children very well. Occasionally the reports contain educational jargon that parents may not readily understand. The nursery also provides a number of courses and workshops for parents during the year on topics such as learning through play and children's language development. These are well attended.
29. Parents are actively involved in identifying, planning and evaluating their children's learning. They also contribute to their children's learning profile, the final copy of which is presented to the children at the "graduation celebration" as they leave the nursery. Relevant information is transferred to their next school.
30. The nursery has developed very good links with other educational establishments, most notably the nearby infant school to which most children transfer, and with the local secondary school. These links provide opportunities for the children to extend their activities in areas such as physical development and music. Where children move on to infant or primary schools that are further afield every effort is made to liaise with the new school to prepare the children for the transfer. The nursery also has links with a range of schools across the country and also with schools in Denmark and Italy. These are as a result of the training work undertaken by nursery staff and they make a very positive contribution to the continued development of the nursery's excellent practice; for example in the development of the 'Woodland School'.
31. The nursery has excellent links with the community that significantly enhance the learning opportunities for the children. The most impressive of these is the school's link with a local businessman who allows the nursery to use his land for the Woodland School. The type and range of learning experiences which take place during these sessions adds an impressive new dimension to the children's education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall leadership and management of the nursery are excellent. The headteacher's leadership is excellent as is that provided by key staff. Management is very effective. Governance is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership.
- The nursery is very inclusive.
- Staff work very well together and form a strong team. There is a high investment in professional development.
- The whole school self-evaluation procedures are not sufficiently analytical.

### **Commentary**

32. The excellent leadership by the headteacher is a particular strength of the nursery. She has an outstanding vision for the nursery based on a strong belief about the ways in which young children learn and what they are capable of achieving. She combines her leadership and teaching roles very well indeed and leads by her own excellent practice. Initiatives are embraced very well so that the nursery takes an important lead in key educational developments. The headteacher is clear about the strengths and weaknesses in the provision at Wingate. She has well researched views about the ways in which future improvements might take place as the nursery changes its status to being a Children's Centre. She is extremely well supported by staff, all of whom are hardworking, very enthusiastic and highly committed to ensuring that the nursery continues to provide very high quality education. All make an important contribution to the quality of the provision and fulfil their responsibilities in an excellent manner.
33. The nursery's clear aims are totally reflected in all aspects of its work. There is a very strong commitment to ensuring that the nursery is inclusive of all and this is evident in practice. Children with a wide range of needs and backgrounds are all highly valued members of the nursery. The ethos of ensuring that children work and achieve through play is embedded as a key principle upon which all activities are based and ensures that children of different abilities are fully engaged. There is a strong belief in and commitment to the need to observe, reflect on and analyse each child's learning to ensure all their needs are met. Overall, the climate for learning is outstanding.
34. The staff are well qualified in a range of different specialisms and they work very well as a team giving good support to each other. There is considerable investment in training for staff at all levels and this ensures that everyone is up-to-date and has the necessary skills and knowledge to support the children's learning and welfare. The training and support work undertaken by the staff in other nurseries has a direct and positive impact on Wingate Nursery since it requires them to be very reflective about their own practice. Performance management is used very effectively to underpin whole school improvement.
35. The governors fulfil their roles very well and the management of the nursery is very good. Governors are very supportive of the nursery and along with the headteacher, they have taken responsibility for establishing the aims of the curriculum. They ensure statutory requirements are met and have established effective policies to guide all aspects of the nursery's work. In consultation with the nursery staff they have helped to ensure a clear and comprehensive improvement plan is in place. Governors show a very good knowledge of what goes on in the nursery and recognise the need to report the outcomes of whole school self-evaluation in a more concise and analytical way.
36. Administrative support in the nursery is very efficient. The headteacher and governing body are very well informed about income and expenditure because of the very detailed reports

provided by the bursar. Criteria to determine how well money is spent are well established, and the governors have a very effective finance policy in place. The day-to-day management of finances is very good and the principles of best value are always at the heart of decisions. The overall expenditure per child is enhanced by extra income generated by the nursery. The table of financial information shows a high carry forward which is intended for developments in the new Children's Centre. This includes monies for the development of a research and training base.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	233,727	Balance from previous year	24,570
Total expenditure	182,929	Balance carried forward to the next	50,798
Expenditure per pupil	4,690		



## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

In all areas of learning the children achieve extremely well as a result of outstanding teaching and learning. Assessment is exemplary and activities are carefully matched to each child's level of understanding. From a very low starting point in communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development they are on course to attain the expected outcomes for their age by the time they leave nursery. In all other areas they are set to exceed the expected outcomes. The provision is extremely well led and managed. Very good improvement has taken place since the last inspection.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve very highly because of the very high expectations set by staff.
- Every opportunity is taken to enhance children's learning in this area.
- Excellent relationships are established and children develop confidence and independence very effectively.

#### **Commentary**

37. Children of different abilities achieve very highly and many children are on course to exceed the expected levels by the time they leave the nursery. Staff use assessment information exceptionally well to ensure that all children are challenged at an appropriate level and as a result children try hard and achieve of their very best.
38. Staff create a very safe and secure environment for learning and children separate from their parents or carers happily. All are keen to take part in the imaginative range of activities in the nursery and are happy to talk about their experiences, for example, what they have done since their last nursery visit. The excellent climate for learning is particularly conducive to children developing confidence to make decisions.
39. Staff listen to children very carefully and take every opportunity to help them realise that they have to 'help each other'. Relationships are excellent and children are very effectively learning to take turns and share equipment. Staff approach behaviour management in a very positive way, continually reinforcing how important it is for the children to learn respect for each other. As a result, the children learn very quickly what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and overall they behave very well. Children are given a high level of responsibility for their own learning and they manage this very well. For example, at the beginning of each session they plan their choices of activities in their groups.
40. A key strength of provision commented on by parents, is the extent to which children gain in confidence and independence. Staff often stand back and, by careful questioning, help children find their own solution to a problem; for example, when the children were planning what sort of ramp the ducklings would need to get into the pool or how they could build a really tall tower with blocks. Most children have developed personal independence. For example, they take themselves to the toilet and return with their hands washed and get themselves dressed to play in the outdoor area or to the Woodland school. The staff help to develop each child's self-esteem very well and help them develop a strong sense of themselves as a member of a community. The Friday 'Supersnack' time is used particularly well to develop children's social skills. Overall, the nursery succeeds in its aim of developing 'citizens of the future' who are socially aware and show care and concern for others.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children achieve exceptionally well because staff ensure that activities are matched to their levels of understanding.
- Children develop skills in speaking and listening and early reading and writing skills extremely well.
- Staff use high level questioning and a wide range of exciting learning opportunities to ensure that children are fully engrossed in learning.

### Commentary

41. Children's achievements are excellent. On entry to the nursery many children have identified needs in this area. From this very low starting point most are on course to attain the expected outcomes by the time they leave. Staff are very secure in teaching this area and they support and challenge children of different abilities, including those with special educational needs, extremely well. They match work carefully to the needs of each child because they know them so well as a result of the outstanding assessment of their understanding. One of the staff has a particularly high level of expertise in the teaching of language and literacy and she gives a very good level of support to others.
42. Staff place high priority on the development of children's skills in speaking and listening and encourage these particularly well in all activities. As a result a significant number of children attain beyond the expected level in this aspect. There is continual emphasis on extending children's vocabulary and ensuring that children learn to articulate words correctly. Staff take time to listen to children and they use a range of different observation techniques extremely well to identify small steps that children might take to achieve improvement. As a result of the excellent relationships that are established all children, even the most reticent, are confident to 'have a go'. Role-play situations are used to advantage, for example the one organised around the theme of 'Under the Sea' where children gained real insight into the story of the Rainbow Fish. The resources are extremely well thought-out and staff interact with children very well and encourage children in these situations.
43. Children are learning the early skills of reading and writing exceptionally well. Staff read stories in a very interesting way and they make excellent use of items, such as puppets, to make text come alive. As a result, the children really enjoy listening to stories. Many are able to answer questions about the story and begin to anticipate what might come next. An emphasis is given to children learning about the ways in which books are organised and they learn to handle books with care. Children build up ideas about which books are their favourites and speak about these with understanding. They are encouraged very well to use large tools such as paint brushes, chinks and crayons to write with and all do this with confidence. Staff invite the children to talk about their work and they show them how to write down their thoughts. They show the children how writing changes for different purposes and children respond to this very well. For example, a small group wrote down a list of rules by themselves, with easily recognisable words and numbers, that they had agreed for the safe use of the new climbing equipment.
44. Staff set up very stimulating situations to engage children's interest and make learning enjoyable. Children clearly enjoy activities such as reading stories to dolls who are sitting under a tree in the garden, retelling favourite stories, talking and writing about their artwork, and writing down the names of the dinosaurs that either sink or float when they fall into puddles in the sand. Staff are particularly talented in questioning children about their work in

a way that extends their thinking and this is one of the key reasons the children make such good progress.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for mathematics development is **excellent**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff ensure that all activities are carefully matched to children's level of understanding.
- There is especially good provision for practical problem solving activities.
- Staff talk about and question the children very well in order to challenge their thinking.

### **Commentary**

45. Overall, children's achievements are excellent. From a low base in this area the children are on course to reach the outcomes expected for their age by the time they leave. As a result of excellent assessment staff set activities that challenge each child in their thinking. Adults reinforce children's understanding of number, its associated vocabulary and how to do simple calculations especially well using every opportunity that arises. For example, when some of the ducklings were taken from the nursery, staff used the occasion very effectively to teach the children about subtraction as they worked out how many they had left from the original six after four had gone.
46. Staff take every opportunity to develop children's counting skills and they learn very effectively to count forwards and backwards and count objects and people. Children all became very familiar with counting the twenty eight days gestation period for the eggs they were hatching and referred to the chart representing this with good understanding. Songs and rhymes are used very effectively to support counting whenever possible. Simple problem solving activities are a very strong, regular feature of the work in mathematics so that children are confident to use their knowledge in this way. Staff constantly ask children questions such as 'How do you think we should do this?' in order to challenge children's thinking. Very good opportunities are given to children to develop their spatial awareness through, for example, building tall towers with large bricks.
47. Very well-focused interaction in role-play encourages children to effectively learn about money and size. For example, they talk about whether they want large or small ice-creams and how many of each they need to buy from the seaside shop. The children learn the vocabulary of size very well, for example 'big and small and long and short' during many different activities. They talk knowledgeably about the changing size of the ducklings they have helped to hatch and also about the wide range of plants they are growing in their small allotment. Earlier work in the year where they learnt about banking was also very successful in reinforcing ideas about measures. They learn about position very effectively, for example as they use pulley systems to move buckets of sand and water up and down the climbing structure in the outdoors. In a wide range of activities in the sand and water, the children develop a good understanding of volume. They clearly understand concepts such as 'full and empty' and 'half full'. When making a range of items in the craft workshop children develop a good understanding of shape. This was reinforced very well when children were looking for different shaped pieces of wood in the garden.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Especially good emphasis is given to the use of first-hand experience and staff use questions very well to make children think.
- A wide range of very well thought-through activities alongside activities that are built on children's own interests and experiences form the basis of the provision.
- Children learn to use information and communication technology very well.
- Visits and visitors are used extremely well to stimulate children's interest.

### Commentary

48. The children are on course to exceed the expected outcomes by the time they leave the nursery. Staff use assessment information exceptionally well to set a high expectation that challenges each child in their thinking.
49. There is a wide range of carefully planned, interesting opportunities which give a good focus to 'first-hand' experience and successfully build on children's natural curiosity in wanting to find out about the world in which they live. Children learn to explore, observe and investigate particularly well. They recognise the need to respect animals; for example when they picked up small creatures in the garden and when they cuddled the ducklings they showed very good levels of sensitivity. Careful questioning by staff, where they ensure that children use the correct terminology, helps the children to notice similarities and differences. Staff encourage the children to make drawings and paintings of the creatures they observe, such as those of slugs, snails, langoustine and mackerel, which reflect the very good quality of the original observation.
50. A range of exciting and interesting activities are arranged and staff make the most of children's own ideas. A good balance is struck between investigating the natural and the man-made world. Photographs and records show how children have had a wide range of opportunities to help establish their early scientific understanding, for instance about ice melting, plants growing and colours changing. In various activities observed during the inspection the children learnt about the flow of water and it was noticeable how well staff used open-ended questions, such as 'What will happen if?', 'Why is this happening?' to challenge their thinking. They continually used the children's own responses as a stimulus for further development.
51. Children enjoy building and constructing using different materials and they do this imaginatively, for example when building an aeroplane out of scrap materials. They use an excellent range of materials and tools and show a good understanding of the ways in which different materials can be joined together.
52. There are many opportunities for children to use information and communication technology, including computers, a digital camera, headphones, tape recorders, an electro-microscope, an inter-active whiteboard, calculators and a programmable toy. They respond particularly well to very high expectation set by staff and make considerable gains in understanding in this aspect. Children develop a good sense of time and this is evident since staff give good emphasis to finding out what the children did since last time they met, as well as in the work the children have done comparing themselves as they are now to what they were like when they first came to nursery.
53. Visits and visitors are used especially well to enhance the work. Good examples being the recent visit the children made to the seaside and the weekly visits to the Woodland School. Children develop a very good knowledge of place and this is demonstrated well in the ways

they use maps to find their way around the woodland area. Children effectively learn about a wide range of different cultures and beliefs, for example when learning about Indonesia in the work undertaken about the tsunami disaster and when making comparisons with life in India and Wingate based on resources brought back after a recent visit by the headteacher to that country.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **excellent**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In response to staff's high expectations children try hard and achieve of their best.
- A wide range of interesting opportunities are used to advantage to support children's learning.

### **Commentary**

54. In all activities staff use observations and assessments exceptionally well to set high expectations. Children of different abilities respond with enthusiasm, make every effort to succeed and achieve exceptionally well. In all activities they play together very well, and are considerate and sensitive towards each other. They take turns, share equipment, develop skills and enjoy their activities. Those children who have special educational needs in this area are catered for extremely well.
55. Staff organise demanding activities so that children develop fine manipulative skills. Children very effectively learn to use a wide range of tools and materials; for instance they use hammers and nails, scissors and string, showing good levels of co-ordination and control as well as the need for safety. They try hard and they are prepared to persevere even when tasks are very intricate and require a high level of concentration. This was especially noticeable when they buttered newly baked bread since the butter melted very quickly. Staff guide children very carefully in the use of equipment so that the children develop good levels of accuracy and skill.
56. Children develop a very good awareness of space, themselves and others, for example as they move about in the outdoor area. They are taught to be considerate of each other. It is noticeable when they push and pull trolleys around in the outdoor area how skilful they are at manipulating them around the edge of the sand pits and the garden areas. Most show good levels of co-ordination and control when using small and large equipment, and also when developing skills such as skipping and running. The children especially enjoy climbing and balancing activities, particularly since new very challenging equipment has been installed. In all activities staff are prepared to model the expected outcomes for children and they challenge the children through excellent quality interaction always expecting them to give of their best. They use children's ideas and experiences to advantage, for example when they set up a climbing activity as a result of one child arriving at the nursery pretending to be spider-man.
57. Staff set up a wide range of interesting opportunities to stimulate learning. Visits to the Woodland School provide high levels of challenge for children for example when they organised getting all the equipment to their camp. This activity was particularly challenging when they encountered muddy sections or a stream so that everyone had to put in significant physical effort simply to get the trailer full of equipment across. A stage set up in the outdoors, with music playing and lengths of material available, provides another exciting opportunity for boys and girls to dance and, even when it rains, they show very imaginative responses and clearly enjoy the activity. Visits to the local primary school also give children particularly very good opportunities to run, dance and use games equipment.

58. Staff emphasise the need for safety in all activities and children respond very well and show good understanding of the need for this. Children learn effectively about the importance of hygiene and healthy living.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for creative development is **excellent**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A very rich environment is created to stimulate children's responses across the curriculum.
- Excellent opportunities are provided for children to be creative.

### **Commentary**

59. There is a wide range of creative opportunities with very high quality experiences that extend their imaginations and enhance the children's skills in painting, making, role play and music. A teacher/artist and an accomplished musician are members of the nursery staff and they make a particularly strong contribution to the excellent teaching and learning in this area.
60. Children have very good model making skills and some spend long periods perfecting their models as was seen when one child made a model dinosaur from boxes and cylinders. Equally focussed attention and concentration was seen from other children making models from different shaped pieces of wood. Children use a wide range of techniques and media to increase their confidence and skills and develop their imaginative response. Very good use is made of opportunities to reinforce and extend children's recognition of colours. For instance, matching and sorting objects by colour, mixing paints or mixing coloured liquids together to see the changes made during water play. Children show increasing control when colouring and drawing. Extremely detailed drawings were produced during the inspection after children had very carefully studied the colour, texture and markings of different fish. Very well thought out experiences ensure that the children have the opportunity to develop their observational skills to their full. Children work very effectively in both two and three dimensions and many opportunities are used to advantage for children to learn through exciting tactile experiences.
61. Excellent opportunities for children to develop their imagination in role play ensure that they do this very well. Many children were seen in the role-play areas re-enacting activities such as buying and selling ice-creams and rock in the seaside shop, preparing meals in the home corner or pretending to be under the sea. Adult involvement in these activities is excellent. Careful questioning by staff extends children's thinking and increases their ideas and creativity. The dens and covered areas in the garden are used very effectively to create areas where children can feel totally independent of staff and these also make a significant contribution to the development of creative ideas. Music plays an important part in the nursery provision and children have many excellent opportunities to take in a wide range of musical activities. Children learn by heart a good repertoire of songs that they sing with enthusiasm. They accompany their singing with percussion instruments well. They also have very good opportunities to make their own music using a wide variety of instruments from many parts of the world.
62. High quality resources are very well organised so that children can make choices about the most appropriate materials and equipment to use. Assessment is exemplary. Staff make observations, take photographs and videos. They analyse children's learning very carefully indeed and then use this information to extend their skills and understanding.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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