

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CASTLE VALE NURSERY SCHOOL**

Castle Vale, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103144

Headteacher: Ms Lesley Wiltshire

Reporting inspector: Mrs L Brackstone  
21872

Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> January 2000

Inspection number: 194453

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 4
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Yatesbury Avenue Castle Vale Birmingham
Postcode:	B35 6DU
Telephone number:	(0121) 748 7578
Fax number:	(0121) 749 2074
Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	N/A
Date of previous inspection:	May 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Area of learning responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Lorna Brackstone	Registered inspector	Creative development	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Jillian Moore	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Denise Franklin	Team inspector	Language and literacy Personal and social development Physical development Equal opportunities Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Jane Pinney	Team inspector	Mathematics Knowledge and understanding English as an additional language	How well does the school care for its pupils?

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Castle Vale Nursery is sited on a large housing estate in the north of Birmingham, which was built in the 1960's to house a population of about 20,000. The nursery was opened in 1976 and currently has capacity for 60 full-time equivalent placements. The Castle Vale estate had many high-rise flats and, during the 1980's, the area was characterised by much deprivation, crime, vandalism and domestic violence. In 1994, residents of Castle Vale established a "Housing Action Trust" and the estate was largely removed from local authority control. The estate is now developing in a positive way and all housing on the estate is being either demolished or renewed. In 1994, a survey by the "Housing Action Trust" gave the current population of the estate as 11,000. Facilities within the area have begun to improve and staff at the school feel a growing sense of pride and confidence amongst parents. As families have been moved out temporarily while their houses are either rebuilt or refurbished, the effect on the school has been considerable, with severe reduction on roll. However, the school anticipates that, as the homes are completed, the school will be full again.

There is high unemployment on the estate and many adults have no qualifications. Over half of the residents in the estate have no means of transport. Health statistics are poor, with figures for heart disease and cancer well above the city average. In 1995, the area was declared as a Health Action Area.

Children are admitted to the nursery on a part-time basis in the September following their third birthday. They spend one year there and then most transfer to one of three local primary schools in the September following their fourth birthday. Ninety-three per cent of the children are of white UK heritage and seven per cent from black Caribbean origins. The main criteria for admission are special educational needs and lack of social development, which are either identified by local health visitors or by the child development centres at local hospitals. There are a high number of children entitled to free school meals. Many children enter the nursery with poor levels of speech and language. Baseline assessments, which are measured on entry into nursery, confirm that these children start with poor levels of attainment.

The aims of the nursery are to provide a welcoming environment where all people in the school feel respected, valued and secure. They endeavour to plan a curriculum which recognises all the needs of the children and nurtures close links with parents and carers. Positive behaviour in school is encouraged and the staff promote each child's confidence and self-esteem. Good links with the community and outside agencies are prioritised and the nursery is keen to be seen as a centre of excellent early years' practice.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

All staff work well as a team to the benefit of all the children. There is good analysis and evaluation of school effectiveness. Personal and social development is the foundation of all their work and children achieve good standards in this area of learning. Children respond to the provision with very good attitudes and behaviour. By the time they are ready to start full-time education, standards in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding, and both physical and creative development are in line with nationally agreed standards. These standards indicate that all the children in the nursery make very good progress and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. With the very good standards in teaching, the provision of a very broad and balanced curriculum and very competent leadership and management, the school provides very good value for money.

### **What the school does well**

- The quality of teaching is very good overall and the management of children is excellent.
- The quality of children's learning is very good and their interest, concentration and independence are excellent. All children, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress.
- The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of children are very good.
- The quality and range of the planned curriculum is very good overall and the contribution of the community to children's learning is excellent.
- Provision for children's moral and social development is excellent. Standards of personal and social development are good.
- Procedures for ensuring children's welfare, including child protection issues, are very good.
- The nursery has very effective links with parents who make a very positive contribution to the children's learning.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and her deputy are very good. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance is very effective and very good use is made of resources.

### **What could be improved**

- The accommodation is inadequate for the needs of the children and the area it serves.
- Make more effective use of the headteacher's time by reorganising and improving the provision of administrative staff, thus enabling her to have more opportunities to work with the children.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in May 1997. All key issues have been acted upon and the nursery has made very good improvement since then.

Standards in language and literacy were judged to be slightly below expected levels by age five. Children's attainment has now improved and standards are now in line with nationally agreed levels for children of this age. This has been achieved though the introduction of a consistent approach to listening skills where there is a strong focus on encouraging children to accurately hear and interpret words and sounds. Activities to encourage both speaking and understanding are also promoted through book discussion groups.

Standards in mathematics have also improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be just below expected levels. A new policy document provides consistency throughout the nursery and the use of a comprehensive grid for assessment purposes has ensured that skills are taught progressively. Standards in mathematics are now in line with the nationally agreed targets. Mental numeracy skills are good and are a strength of the nursery.

The local authority framework for early years curriculum has been introduced to support planning and this is well used to plan both termly topics and prepare activities on a weekly basis. Schemes of work, for all the areas of learning for children under five, have been developed and each termly topic is planned to build on the work of the previous one. Record keeping has improved since the previous inspection and the attainment of the children is thoroughly recorded.

Further opportunities have been created for children to be more independent in their learning. This has been achieved by making resources more accessible, giving children regular responsibilities and by promoting this approach through staff training.

The headteacher regularly monitors the teaching and learning in the school and improvements have taken place through staff professional development, collective reviewing and timetable changes. Leadership has concentrated on teaching and learning and on the development of a professional culture

and learning organisation. This has been achieved through clear objectives and policies which focus on the children's needs and give direction to the work of the school.

## STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about the achievements of pupils in relation to the national early learning goals by the time they leave the school.

<b>Performance in:</b>		<b>Key</b>  well above average    A above average        B average                C below average        D well below average   E
Language and literacy	C	
Mathematics	C	
Personal and social development	B	
Other areas of the curriculum	C	

Standards in personal and social development are above the nationally agreed levels for children of this age. Standards of language and literacy are in line, with levels of listening above that expected for children of this age. Standards in mathematics are in line with nationally agreed levels for children of this age. Mental numeracy levels are good and are a significant strength within the nursery. Children achieve appropriate standards in all aspects of knowledge and understanding, which include their scientific, geographical, historical, information and design and technology skills. Standards in physical development are also in line with nationally agreed levels at age five. Overall, standards in creative development are in line with those expected at this age, with achievements in singing above that expected for children of this age

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Children are very keen and eager to come to the nursery and are interested and involved in their activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Children behave very well during all sessions and are respectful of property in and around the nursery.
Personal development and relationships	Children form very constructive relationships with each other and with all adults in the nursery. They are sensitive to the impact of their actions on friends and respect each other's feelings, values and beliefs.
Attendance	The nursery has very high levels of attendance.

Overall, the attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships of the children are very good throughout the nursery. Their enthusiasm for school is reflected in the very good attendance figures.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged up to 5 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Very good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

During the inspection 35 sessions or part sessions were observed. Teaching was never less than good and in 71 per cent of lessons, it was very good or excellent. There were no unsatisfactory lessons observed. The quality of teaching was very good in language and literacy, mathematics, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding, physical development and creative development. Particular strengths of the teaching were the excellent management of the children, the very good knowledge and understanding of all the staff and the high expectations of both behaviour and performance. Both teachers and nursery nurses are able to teach basic skills competently and use a variety of different teaching methods effectively. These include individual and both small and large group sessions. Time is used very well and teaching sessions are brisk in pace, with resources being deployed very successfully. The quality of day-to-day assessment is also very good and used well to monitor the children's progress. Homework is used well to promote the children's learning.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	A very good range of appropriate activities is provided and these meet the needs of all children within the nursery. Provision for personal, social and health education is excellent, as is the contribution made by the community to children's learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Children with special educational needs are provided with a curriculum that meets their particular needs and abilities. They make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for children's moral and social development is excellent. Provision for children's cultural development is very good and provision for spiritual development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The nursery cares very well for its children. Procedures for monitoring academic progress and performance development are very good. The support for both educational and personal guidance is also very effective and procedures for ensuring their welfare are very good.

The school has very effective links with the parents and this involvement has a very good impact on the work of the school. The quality of information provided by the nursery for the parents is of very high quality. Parents contribute very well to the children's learning, both at home and school.

#### **HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	High standards and effective learning are very successfully promoted and managed by both the headteacher and her deputy.
The school's evaluation of its performance	All nursery staff are committed to improvement. Appropriate priorities and targets are thoroughly identified and progress regularly reviewed.
The strategic use of resources	Educational priorities are very carefully supported through the school's financial planning. Effective use is made of both specific grants and new technology.

The nursery has three full-time teachers, including the headteacher, and a good number of nursery nurses. All staff are experienced and well qualified to teach children under five. They work very closely together and staff complement each other well. The overall supply of learning resources is good. The school has a very good supply of big books and resources for outside play are of very high quality. Resources are suitable to the ages and needs of the children. However, the adequacy of accommodation is unsatisfactory. The headteacher has no private area to take parents, there are no quiet areas for specific withdrawal sessions, such as speech therapy, and storage space is very limited.

A particular strength of management is the strategies deployed to monitor, evaluate and develop teaching. Procedures for this are clearly outlined in a comprehensive policy and are carried out by interaction in the classroom, involvement in planning meetings, staff appraisal interviews and regular monitoring by the local authority advisor. However, a weakness is the headteacher's use of time when the part-time secretary is not in school.

#### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like nursery.</li> <li>• Parents feel that the teaching is good.</li> <li>• They feel that the nursery is well managed and led.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable approaching the nursery with questions or problems.</li> <li>• They are pleased with standards of behaviour in the nursery.</li> <li>• The nursery works closely with them.</li> <li>• Parents feel that their children make good progress at school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents only gave positive views.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with all the views of the parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. The majority of children start the nursery with levels of skills in all areas of learning which are poor. This is especially noticeable in language and literacy, and speaking skills are not well developed when they enter the nursery. However, by the time they are ready to move on to primary school at age four, standards of personal and social development are above that expected for children of this age and in all other areas of learning, standards are in line with nationally agreed levels. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
2. Standards in personal and social development are likely to be above the nationally agreed levels by the time that children are five. They make very good progress in all aspects of personal development and confidently apply the new skills that they have learnt. For example, they quickly learn to share and take turns in the activities. Children begin to mix well with each other and make very good relationships with adults. They become independent in looking after their own needs, such as visiting the toilet, and clear away equipment after use. They respond well to a variety of cultural and religious events, such as Christmas, Diwali and Eid. Children's behaviour is also very good.
3. Standards in language and literacy are in line to meet the nationally agreed levels at five years old and children are making very good progress in their learning. They enjoy communicating through role-play and involve both other children and adults in their games. For example, they confidently use a pretend telephone and hold a conversation with an adult. Every day they enjoy many opportunities to listen to stories and develop their understanding of books through response to the pictures and the recognition of repetitive words. Children have started to identify their names when they are written down. Some are learning to write their own names and all children productively make marks on paper to symbolise their developing understanding of writing.
4. Standards of mathematics in the nursery are in line with nationally agreed levels and children are making very good progress in their acquisition of new skills and understanding. They are learning to count to five and a small number of children can count beyond this. They sort and match confidently using a variety of colours and their mathematical vocabulary is developed through practical activities, such as sand and water play. They have developed a good awareness of patterns through jigsaws and constructions using building blocks. Informal opportunities are well used to encourage the children to apply mathematical effort. For example, they are encouraged to count the number of children present during circle times. Standards of mental numeracy are good, with the children able to partake at a confident pace using both number songs and practical counting games.
5. Children's standards in knowledge and understanding of the world are set to reach the nationally agreed levels by the age of five. They are able to develop their scientific knowledge and skills through a wide range of experiences and observations. For example, the children are able to find out, by discussion and investigation, the strongest material to make a house when they compare straws, sticks and bricks. Geographical skills are promoted through a range of visits and observations of their local environment. This enhances their understanding of the locality and promotes an awareness of how they need to care for the world around them. Comparisons between the old and the new also develop historical concepts and develop their understanding of past and present. For example, children have brought in pictures of themselves when they were a baby and have compared them with what they look like now. Information and design and technology skills

are progressing well with most children able to use a mouse as a control unit. They show interest in using the computer and apply both intellectual and physical skills to the activities.

6. In physical development, children are likely to have reached appropriate standards by the time that they are five. They develop their physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative skills to the levels nationally agreed by five. The children are able to confidently use the equipment provided in the outdoor play area. For example, they can climb skilfully and balance with agility. They also use scooters and bikes with growing confidence and operate large wheeled toys carefully, showing a good awareness of other children engaged in different activities.
7. In creative development, children are likely to achieve the expected levels by the time that they are five years old. They make very good progress in developing their skills in printing, painting, drawing and collage work. They apply creative effort well into their work. For example, they creatively make houses for the “Three Little Pigs”, using a variety of different collage materials and types of glue. Children work productively and are able to talk knowledgeably about what they are doing. Children sing well and have daily singing sessions, which include action rhymes and songs. They are also able to play a variety of un-tuned instruments and confidently explore sound, both individually and in small groups. Imaginative role-play situations provide further opportunities to promote a range of skills, which develops the children’s learning.
8. Children with special educational needs are learning very well. They are making very good progress in relation to the targets set on their individual education plans. Early identification and very good support by adults helps them gain confidence and extends their learning. They often receive individual attention, which enables them to acquire and develop new skills at a pace appropriate to themselves.
9. The nursery is eager to improve standards and is very well placed to succeed given the very good leadership and the very high quality teaching which has a significant impact on the children’s learning.

### **Pupils’ attitudes, values and personal development**

10. The previous inspection reported that pupils’ attitudes were very good throughout the nursery and this high standard has been maintained very well. The procedures work very efficiently and children show concern for each other and listen well, both to the teachers and to each other. Children’s work and effort is valued highly and praised frequently by staff to raise the children’s self esteem. This is particularly evident when the children show initiative or display knowledge previously learnt. The children have very good relationships with staff and other adults. There is a very effective use of personal health and social education within the school and registration time is frequently used for this purpose. Language development is supported well in class. The school makes full use of an in-school speech therapist, which has been provided as a result of the school’s awareness of the children’s needs. Their willingness to work co-operatively with other agencies has a positive impact on the children’s learning. Social skills and guides to healthy living are passed on throughout the school day as a matter of course, for example, how to fasten coats, wash hands after visiting the toilet and not to spread germs by coughing over everyone. The children’s welfare is the school’s prime concern.
11. The teachers know the children well and they encourage them to join in and try things for themselves, and to remember what they have already learnt and to understand the consequences of their actions. The children play well together and enjoy their activities. They share the resources well and politely wait their turn. The children are always eager to try something new, which is a tribute to the teachers’ enthusiasm and imaginative teaching. The children work well together and

value others' contributions. The school does a great deal to ensure that the children appreciate the beliefs of other cultures and religions. This is reflected in the displays around the school and the topics that are chosen.

12. Behaviour is very good and children interact very well together. The children are very keen to be given responsibility and manage it well. Different groups are chosen each day for duties around the school. The school is careful to ensure that, whilst gaining these valuable social skills, the children do not miss out on other activities. For example, the group chosen to put out new toys and clear away during break times are given extra focused activity sessions. This high standard of behaviour has been maintained since the last inspection.
13. Attendance is very good and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory overall. The registers are marked and closed correctly. Lateness is followed up when it occurs and parents are encouraged to ensure that the children are on time. If absence occurs on a regular basis, parents are informed that the child's place may be withdrawn. However, the school is always alive to family problems and are eager to help wherever possible. The school works very well with a variety of outside agencies to ensure that the wellbeing of the children is protected at all times. Links with a large number of groups and local agencies within the community are excellent.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

14. The quality of teaching is very good overall and has significantly improved since the last inspection. Teachers and nursery nurses carry out teaching equally and judgements are based on observations of all these staff. During the inspection, all teaching was either good or better and 71 per cent of this was either very good or excellent. The quality of teaching is reflected in the very good progress made by the children. Parents recognise and appreciate the quality of the staff 's work.
15. Teaching within all the areas of learning is equally very good and staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the educational needs of children under five. They know which particular skills in young children should be developed and activities are both structured and organised very well to enable children to apply their intellectual, physical and creative effort. For example, the imaginative play area successfully enables the teaching and learning of most skills and, during the inspection, a building site had been set up to stimulate imaginative play. Hard hats were provided for all the children involved and they were made aware of the safety of such sites by the use of safety signs and warning "cones". Actual plans were referred to in their construction activity and this promoted comparisons between different types of materials such as plastic and wood. The children worked well together, showing interest in their work and learning for themselves. The level of adult interaction was very good and enabled the children to work at a good pace to extend their learning skills.
16. Both teachers and nursery nurses are competent to teach the basic skills and have a secure understanding of how both literacy and numeracy should be taught. All adults within the nursery develop children's awareness and understanding of language and literacy through talking and developing an understanding of letters, sounds and words. For example, a regular feature in the nursery is "Big Book Time" when stories are used to promote speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Very good questioning during these sessions ensures that all children understand the meaning of the words in the text. Their pre-reading skills are developed through repetition, individual involvement and recall. Numeracy skills are successfully promoted through number rhymes and songs, such as "Five Little Frogs" and counting games, which the children improve on consistently.

17. Planning throughout the nursery is very good, with staff working together appropriately as a team. They meet together regularly to plan activities and incorporate the individual needs of the children in these sessions. They prepare a wide range of stimulating activities, which give very appropriate first-hand experiences and are planned to both specifically extend children's work and maintain their interest. Adults regularly work in different areas and this means that expertise is shared. Many of the activities are changed daily, but others remain to allow children to re-visit and consolidate their learning. Some are linked together across the areas of learning and are designed to encourage children to use different parts of the nursery during the session. For example, musical instruments are put outside to give children opportunities to explore sounds freely outside the context of a music session. Very good links are also made between the areas of learning through the topic approach. For example, number rhymes and songs about their specific topics also promote numeracy skills.
18. All members of staff use a very successful range of teaching methods. These include whole school sessions, small group circle times and individual work. The very good organisation and management of the teaching areas allows the children easy access to a wide range of well-prepared resources in each area. This helps children to work independently, enabling them to choose their own resources and undertake their work independently. Children are encouraged to develop their social skills, particularly in "circle time", and are given very good opportunities to develop sustained concentration.
19. The nursery is characterised by a relaxed, friendly ethos, with excellent relationships between adults and children and positive behaviour management. High expectations of behaviour are conveyed through careful use of praise and encouragement, with quiet reminders if necessary. Children who have been identified as having behaviour problems are managed in a positive way.
20. Time is always used to the maximum. Activities in the nursery are completely set up and ready to go before children arrive at both morning and afternoon sessions. Children move straight into their activities and this means none of their motivation is lost. Story time leads naturally into home time and parents are welcomed into the nursery to collect their children. Resources are very well used, staff plan what to use carefully and change aspects on a regular basis.
21. Overall the quality and use of teachers' day-to-day assessment is very good. All staff share the enjoyment of children's successes and show delight at each child's achievements. Staff assess children continuously and use this information very well to guide and prompt them. Discussions are held, both formally and informally, to discuss children's achievements and is used very well to track children's progress.
22. Teaching for children with special educational needs is very good. All members of the support staff play a significant role in helping to raise standards of achievement. Staff make careful efforts to ensure that the work planned for children is well matched to their individual needs. They regularly review these and share them with parents. All staff work well with children with special educational needs to help them achieve their specific targets. Staff have high expectations and very good relationships which encourage children to try hard to succeed and make a very positive contribution to the very good progress children are making. Close contacts are made with parents, health and speech therapists. A range of very good strategies is used to ensure that the children are able to participate fully in all activities, including physical play. The work of all these children is regularly assessed and the information gained is targeted to support their learning needs.
23. Parents are welcomed into the nursery to help with activities. Children choose books to take home at the beginning of each session and parents are encouraged to join in this activity, which they appreciate and supports their involvement in their children's learning and progress in reading.

24. In the last inspection, there was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching observed and it was reported that not all staff were familiar with the recommended desirable learning outcomes at age five. This weakness has been rectified and is reflected in the very high standard of teaching observed during the inspection.

### **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

25. The nursery provides the children with a very good curriculum, which is very broad, balanced and covers all areas of learning. It has appropriately improved the curriculum since the previous inspection by having more opportunities for adults to support children in developing language skills during sessions in the imaginative play area and during small group times. A strong feature of the curriculum is the development of the provision outdoors to match opportunities provided indoors. For example there are books for children to share, a blackboard for writing activities and opportunities for children to make music using the instruments. Children have very good opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge through a good balance of adult-directed activities and ones of their own choices. The areas indoors are clearly defined into each area of learning. The children are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
26. There are comprehensive policies and schemes of work for each area of learning. They have recently introduced a checklist to indicate the development of skills for each area, which is being used well to ensure that skill progression is being appropriately addressed in planning. The staff plan effectively together. Long-term planning identifies the topic themes for the year and includes the main aim and focus appropriately. The topics are planned in more detail for a half term and linked well to each area of learning. The staff highlight the specific language they would like to develop, linked to the topic, and these lists are clearly displayed in each area. Short-term planning is undertaken effectively by individuals and monitored by the curriculum co-ordinator. The plans are evaluated well and used effectively to guide future planning. This has addressed the key issue from the previous inspection well. Half-term plans are clearly displayed in the entrance area for parents, together with a short description and photographs of typical activities which take place in each of the areas in the nursery. Strategies provided by the nursery for teaching literacy and numeracy are very effective.
27. The nursery places appropriate importance on equal opportunity and is successful in achieving this. There is very good provision for children with special educational needs. Where appropriate, children have individual education plans and these identify measurable targets, which are reviewed regularly. All agencies involved contribute to the targets and their reviews. Staff are aware of the targets and individual education plans are displayed in the staff room. The needs of the children are regularly discussed during staff meetings. The needs of children are also very well met through a scheme, which very effectively supports children and their families.
28. There are very good links with the community and they make an excellent contribution to the children's learning. A very successful project has recently been completed entitled "Living in our Community" and has involved making models of facilities in the local community, imaginative play activities, for example "The Health Centre", and the nursery's participation in collecting toiletry gifts for the elderly in the community. Parental involvement is good. Opportunities are provided for children to take books home to share with an adult and parents regularly attend curriculum workshops with their child. Links with other nurseries, portage workers, the Home-Start support workers, speech therapists and the Housing Action Trust are all very good and they work together extremely well for the benefit of the children. The curriculum is very well enhanced by visits, visitors to the nursery and by the very good use of the local environment. For example, children are

modelling activities taking place on the building site opposite their nursery and there is a project planned for later this term when teachers and artists are working together.

29. Provision for children's spiritual, moral and social development overall is very good and has been maintained and developed well since the previous inspection.
30. Provision for spiritual development is good. Children have good opportunities to develop self-respect and value beliefs of others. For example, children show respect for the statue of Buddha and Christmas, Eid and Diwali. There are appropriate moments of reflection and a prayer before lunch.
31. The provision for moral and social development is excellent. There is a very positive approach to behaviour management, which makes a significant contribution to moral development. Children are told right from wrong sensitively and the staff, who set excellent examples, consistently reinforce moral values. The nursery is extremely successful in fostering the qualities of tolerance, equality, courtesy and good manners. These are also reinforced excellently during the family group sessions at the start of the nursery timetable, when children have their drink and during circle time. There are excellent opportunities provided to develop their independence through the choice of activities, either indoors or outdoors, and also to learn to share and take turns. In the range of activities including the imaginative play area children learn to respect each other and value each other's contributions. This is very much influenced by the way the adults very much value the children's contributions and ideas.
32. The provision for cultural development is very good and has a positive impact on the children's knowledge and understanding. Very good use is made of the local area to develop their own culture and also opportunities to look at and discuss Victorian artefacts. They are given good opportunities to think about the cultures of others, for example the Muslim faith and through celebrating festivals such as Diwali. An Asian community worker regularly visits the nursery and shares her customs with them. These are examples of the very good opportunities provided by the nursery to promote cultural awareness.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

33. The quality of support and guidance given to the children at the school is very good, with the result that the children feel secure and happy in the bright and stimulating environment. All staff at the school provide effective role models for the children and enhance the caring ethos of the school through their helpful and caring attitudes. Staff observe the children closely and get to know them very well. Personal and academic development is monitored most effectively through continuous discussion and consistent record keeping.
34. At the previous inspection, assessment was identified as an issue for future development. The school now has an appropriate assessment policy and very good procedures are in place. In all areas of learning, assessments are now sharply focused on what the children know, understand and can do and are accurately based on the criteria in the desirable learning outcomes. Children are assessed on entry to the nursery and, thereafter, assessment is used regularly to inform planning. Children's achievement and progress is documented comprehensively. Samples of work are maintained which provide evidence of progress over the year. The children's self-esteem is enhanced considerably by the graduation ceremony that is held at the end of each year. At this ceremony each child is presented with a bound copy of their record of achievement, which is also passed on to their next school.

35. Behaviour and attendance are monitored well and this brings about early action to prevent problems from developing. Staff work closely with parents to ensure they bring and collect their children on time. Discipline and behaviour are promoted very well. There are high expectations of behaviour in a climate where all children are highly valued. Children are well motivated through positive reinforcement of their actions and the low levels of sanctions employed are evidence of the success of the school in promoting good behaviour. Members of staff effectively use role-play to assist children to understand the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. There are effective procedures in place to eliminate bullying and other forms of oppressive behaviour.
36. Arrangements for child protection are very thorough. A properly designated teacher oversees practice in the school and all staff are fully aware of procedures, which are followed in accordance with local guidelines. Health and safety arrangements are well managed on the whole, although no fire drill has been carried out in the current academic year. Monitoring procedures ensure the school is a safe place for children. Welfare arrangements are very good. Children are well supervised at all times. Very good use is made of outside agencies to support the wellbeing of the children. The premises provide a clean and well cared for environment, which is respected by all who use it.
37. Assessment procedures are very effective in identifying children with special educational needs. The children are regularly assessed by staff in the nursery and outside agencies, such as the speech therapist who provides the children and parents with a very good level of support. Individual education plans are regularly reviewed and new targets set. The specialist scheme, which supports both the children and their families, is very effective in making assessments and setting targets to support individuals while in the nursery and at home. This is having a very positive impact on the attainment and progress of these children. The nursery is also well supported by the Home-Start scheme, in which volunteer workers support families, and by the psychology service.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

38. The school has very good links with parents. This is a strength of the school and was reflected in the questionnaire to parents. Parents are fully valued and their support is canvassed from their very first contact with the school. There is a clear, well-presented "Admissions Booklet", which prepares parents for their child's entry into the nursery and states the school's policies and times. Parents are allowed to judge for themselves how quickly their child has settled into the school and their views are really valued. The school has very good links with a very wide and diverse group of agencies and organisations. These all work within the local community to support and develop family life and welfare. The school works very closely with the local day nursery where some of the children spend part of the school day. Teachers from the school sometimes take children to the day nursery after school when there is illness in the family. The co-operation between the two groups is of mutual benefit and is valued by the parents. The school's use of both a speech therapist and health visitor within the school is of great help to parents. As a result, many problems are picked up very early and joint solutions are found which have a positive impact on the children's learning. The school's involvement with many outside groups increases parent's awareness of facilities within the local area and promotes a very strong local community spirit.
39. The school involves parents in workshops held at the school. These cover many areas of school life and include writing, computers and mathematics. Parents' views and skills are valued and these workshops are helpful to all involved. The nursery also encourages families to value their children's education and this increases their willingness to learn. For example, at the end of the year in nursery, the children and their families are invited to attend a "Graduation Ceremony". The children take books home on a regular basis and these are changed very regularly. Song booklets are also sent home for the children. Parents are encouraged to join in with the songs and to hear

their children read. Good parenting skills are also shared with parents through activities at school such as the 'Sun Sense' scheme, which warns of the dangers of too much sun. Parents' involvement in the school enhances the children's learning in many ways and is greatly valued by the school.

40. Parents are kept very well informed of their children's progress during the year and are encouraged to share any problems with the school. Parents are involved in school trips and regularly attend performances and other celebrations. The school always listens to parents and does its best to take into account what parents say. This is reflected in the glowing reports about the school from parents, both in the questionnaire and at the school gate. At the end of the year, the children take home a record of achievement so that they have a permanent record of their time at the school. The school shows real enthusiasm when preparing these reports, which underlines their joy at the children's attainment levels and their determination to share this with parents.
41. The nursery ensures effectively that all parents of children with special educational needs are fully involved with their child's progress and there is a very good open-door relationship between parents and the nursery.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

42. The headteacher, her deputy and all other staff have a very clear vision of what sort of school this should be. There are very effective aims, values and policies and high standards are both strongly promoted and well supported by all staff. A commitment to developing children's independent thinking and their self-esteem is reflected in all its work. All members of staff work hard to achieve these aims, the success of which is evident in the happy and confident children who persevere with tasks and are prepared to try out new activities.
43. The support and monitoring of both the quality of teaching and the curriculum provision are very good. The curriculum is monitored constantly at weekly staff meetings and all members of staff contribute ideas for improvement. More in-depth evaluations are carried out during training days and are well documented. The headteacher and deputy monitor planning each week and carry out regular observations, which are used to identify some of the strengths and weaknesses of the nursery. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the regular training and professional development of teachers and nursery nurses, which is closely linked to both the priorities identified in the school development plan and to individual needs. The school's strategies for appraisal and performance management are appropriate but there is no induction policy for new members of staff.
44. Development planning is very good and has been a significant factor in the improvement since the last inspection. The targets that have been set clearly reflect the headteacher's vision of how the nursery is developing. Appropriate structures and systems are in place to ensure that the nursery is a progressive and professional establishment in which children achieve well.
45. Although the school does not have full control of its finances, the quality of the financial planning in relation to its educational priorities is very good. The school development plan clearly documents financial implications and these are closely linked with the targets set. A recent audit identified some minor issues that could be improved and the school has already started to implement alternative procedures. Effective use is made of new technology and specific grants are used well.
46. The school has a sufficient number of suitably qualified teachers and a good provision of nursery nurses. All members of staff work very hard and are suitably qualified to teach all the areas of learning for children under five. Their expertise is good across the different areas of the curriculum. The professional competence of the nursery nurses and their sharing of responsibilities

is a significant strength of the school. Their support makes a very good contribution to the quality of learning of children. Members of staff work well as a team, meeting regularly to plan work, assess children and evaluate what has already been taught. The headteacher co-ordinates the provision for special educational needs and statutory requirements are met. The register is appropriately reviewed and up-dated. Targets are effectively written for individual children in consultation with the staff. Children on the register are supported by the headteacher when she is available through both withdrawal and classroom involvement. Visiting agencies are complimentary of the quality of provision available to the children with special educational needs.

47. The overall supply of learning resources is good. The school has a very good supply of big books and resources for outside play are of a very high quality. All resources are readily accessible to staff and, where appropriate, to children also. Resources are suitable to the ages and needs of the children. However, the adequacy of the accommodation is unsatisfactory. The headteacher has no access to a private area to take parents, there are no quiet areas for specific withdrawal sessions, such as speech therapy, and storage space is very limited. This has a negative effect on children's learning.

48. The nursery is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the accommodation, fuel bills and administrative and training budgets. The headteacher ensures that best value principles are used and tenders are invited for all contracts. However, a weakness is the ineffective use of the headteacher's time to tend the office when the part-time secretary is not in. This limits her involvement and support with the children, particularly those with special educational needs. However, talking into account the standards achieved, the very good quality of education provided, the very good leadership and management, the nursery provides very good value for money.

**WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

49. The headteacher and staff in conjunction with the local authority should:

- consider ways to extend the accommodation which is currently inadequate to meets the needs of the nursery (see paragraph 47);
- make more effective use of the headteacher's time by reorganising and improving the provision of administrative staff, thus enabling her to have more opportunities to interact with the children on either an individual or group basis and particularly to support those with special educational needs (see paragraph 48).

50. In addition to the key issues above, the following area for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- implementing minor issues identified in the recent audit (see paragraph 45);
- introducing regular fire drills (see paragraph 36);
- developing an induction policy for new staff (see paragraph 43).

**PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

*Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed

35
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Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

26
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*Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
11	60	29	0	0	0	0

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

### ***Information about the school's pupils***

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	47.5
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	40

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	32

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### ***Attendance***

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	N/A

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	N/A

*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### *Teachers and classes*

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	88

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### *Financial information*

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	17,715
Total expenditure	16,937
Expenditure per pupil	56
Balance brought forward from previous year	
Balance carried forward to next year	709

***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	91
Number of questionnaires returned	35

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	97	3	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	83	17	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	86	11	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	63	26	9	0	0
The teaching is good.	94	6	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	74	23	0	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	89	11	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	34	6	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	83	14	0	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	91	6	0	3	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	80	17	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	60	23	14	0	0

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

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

#### **Personal and social development**

51. The personal and social development of the children is above the nationally expected levels by the time the children are five. They make excellent progress in the nursery through the excellent provision and care of the staff.
52. Most children quickly develop very effective relationships with each other and adults in the nursery. An example of this is in the imaginative play area where children take on roles of builders and play very well together. They respect each other and are considerate of each other's needs. In group times, they take turns when speaking and are polite and courteous. They share well, for example, on the large outdoor toys and work together very successfully with the sand and water activities.
53. During circle-time, most children are gaining confidence in expressing their feelings and are showing a good respect for other cultures. For example, in one family group area there is a small statue of Buddha and children show their respect by bringing small gifts of stones for the Buddha. They have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong and understand the code of behaviour expected by everyone in the nursery.
54. The children develop very good attitudes to learning and very good concentration skills. For example, they concentrate very well during the "big book " session and when making their clay models. They take very good care of the nursery environment and its equipment. They also develop independence very well. For instance, children collect the register and return it to the office. They also give out the drinks during snack time. A group of children are responsible each day for helping to tidy away equipment at the end of each session. They show a range of feelings in response to the many interesting activities and very well told stories. The well-planned activities help to foster positive attitudes and relationships.
55. Progress is excellent due to the care, sensitivity and expectations of all the staff. Children develop their independence in a range of activities provided in the happy and secure environment. This has improved significantly since the previous inspection and the key issue to develop more opportunities for the children to select their own resources and set out and put away equipment has been addressed well.
56. The quality of teaching is very good. Medium-term plans clearly identify development in this area of learning, and although not specifically planned for on all short-term plans, is clearly implicit in all that happens in the nursery. The staff are excellent role models and are continually reinforcing expected behaviour and attitudes and raising awareness with a very sensitive approach. The headteacher monitors effectively planning and outcomes.

#### **Language and literacy**

57. Standards of attainment in language and literacy are in line with the nationally agreed levels. Many children enter the nursery with skills well below those expected nationally and all children make very good progress while in the nursery. Since the previous inspection the staff have developed an appropriate scheme of work and a check sheet to use in planning to ensure progression of skills in each aspect of language and literacy, which has had a significant impact on progress. Language and

literacy has an appropriate high profile in the school, particularly this term with the theme of traditional stories as the main focus.

58. Children listen carefully, looking at the adult, and follow instructions well and particularly enjoy stories. They listen carefully to tapes in the book room, turn the pages of the books appropriately and talk with increasing confidence to adults and to each other. For example, they talk to each other about the pictures in a book and tell their friend the story. In role-play activities, they take on the roles of “The Three Little Pigs” and “the Wolf” well and in the imaginative play area they confidently become workers on a building site. For these activities, the children receive very good support from staff and this has a very positive impact on their achievement in learning. Frequent communication between staff and children reinforces language skills. Language skills development has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The language skills of pupils with special educational needs are less well developed and some children speak in simple words or very short phrases.
59. Children enjoy books and are making good progress in beginning to recognise that words carry meaning. Some children are beginning to associate initial letter sounds with words; for example they recognise that “Monday” begins with the letter “m”. They handle books carefully and most know where the story will start and end. The higher attaining children confidently point to the words in the text and can explain what is happening in the pictures in detail. Other children enjoy listening to the story and turn the pages appropriately. They can give a brief description of the pictures. Lower attaining children point to pictures in response to questions and have a shorter concentration span than their peers when listening to the story. Children often choose to share books and sit quietly together telling each other the story. Most children know the repeated phrases in the story of “The Three Little Pigs”. Since the previous inspection there has been an appropriate greater emphasis encouraging children to be familiar with well-known stories. Most recognise their own name and can put their name card on the peg when they arrive at school. All children take home books regularly to share with an adult and the school has decided to introduce a planned “big book” session for children during the week. These are having a positive impact on children’s attainment and progress.
60. A significant number of children are beginning to understand the purpose of writing and can make marks satisfactorily on paper to convey meaning. The higher attaining children can use identifiable letters from their name in their writing and others can use pictures and marks to convey writing. Since the previous inspection more opportunities have been provided to encourage mark making. For example, special needs children can make marks to convey the name of the group when preparing the drinks for the children. Other children record appropriately the name of the book which they are taking home. Some children respond well to pictures from the story of the “Three Little Pigs” by mark making to write the story. Adults then demonstrate how to record the information by demonstrating good practice. This is done with great sensitivity and is enabling the children to make good progress in developing their writing skills.
61. Overall children make very good progress in language and literacy skills during their time in the nursery. By the time they leave, they listen attentively and talk about their experiences with increasing vocabulary. They associate sounds with words and are becoming aware of the purpose of writing. Many children progress from mark making to form recognisable letter shapes. Children with special educational needs make very good progress in developing language and literacy skills at their level.
62. Children have very positive attitudes to their learning. They sustain concentration very well for a significant amount of time and stay on task. They co-operate and behave very well. The standard of behaviour is very good and this has a considerable effect on attainment and progress.

63. The quality of teaching is very good. Staff put an appropriate high emphasis on language and literacy skills. Activities are very well planned with clear learning objectives and all areas are very well organised. Adults question very well to encourage children to talk about the stories and activities and they use very good strategies to encourage participation, particularly in the imaginative play area. They value all children's contributions. There are high expectations of behaviour and very good relationships. Time and resources are used very well. The nursery has appropriately introduced a short "big book" session following a meeting about the national literacy strategy, which is having a positive impact on the children's enthusiasm for books and understanding of early reading strategies. Very good use is made of "observations", which are recorded well on individual assessment cards to ensure that their individual needs are met. Assessment procedures for language and literacy have improved significantly since the previous inspection and this has had a very good impact on the children's learning. The staff know their children very well and all staff plan together weekly to ensure progression of skills and that the needs of all the children are appropriately met. The co-ordinator oversees and monitors planning appropriately, which is completed very effectively as a whole staff activity.

## **Mathematics**

64. In mathematics, the standards of the children are in line to meet the nationally agreed levels for children of this age. Children make very good progress, particularly in their oral numeracy skills. Standards in mathematics have improved since the previous inspection as a result of several successful initiatives, including a new mathematics policy and improved staff training.

65. Children are beginning to develop a mathematical vocabulary as they confidently use words, such as bigger than and smaller than, when making a variety of cakes with play dough. Most children can successfully sort items according to size or colour and are learning to recognise common shapes. They are beginning to understand the principle of measurement. For example, when using construction toys to make ladders for model houses they measure them against the house to ensure they are the correct length and match each side of the ladder to ensure they are equal. When using the computer they match one to one confidently as they allocate a banana to each monkey. Children know a range of number rhymes such as "When Goldilocks Went To The House Of The Bears".

66. Children are developing a good understanding of numbers. They name and recognise numbers to ten and most can sequence them in the correct order. Children are beginning to write numbers and higher attaining children are beginning simple addition. For example, at registration, one child counted how many children were present and knew how many there would be should another child arrive. All children are beginning to use their numeracy skills well as part of their daily school life as, for instance, when they pretend to set the oven timer when baking their play-dough cakes or when they count how many bricks they have used to build a wall.

67. The children's attitudes to mathematics are very good. They make their own choices from a wide range of mathematical activities, such as number games and jigsaws, and demonstrate concentration and perseverance. In number games they participate well as members of a group, allowing others to take turns and sharing equipment. The children demonstrate great enthusiasm for oral number work, being very keen to volunteer an answer or to pick out a given number.

68. The teaching of mathematics is very good overall and can be excellent. Where teaching is excellent the teacher demonstrates very good subject knowledge and high expectations as she asks searching questions that challenge the children. She ensures that all the children are contributing and adjusts the pace of the lesson as a result of ongoing assessments. For example, when it becomes apparent that not all the children in the group are familiar with the number ten, she spends time discussing

this before moving on to her next question. In all lessons children are given tasks that are well suited to their individual needs. For example, during a number game, a higher attaining child was given the task of checking whether the other children had correctly counted the spots after throwing a dice. Teachers use every opportunity during the daily life of the school to improve children's mathematical understanding as, for instance, when they count children present at registration, or encourage children to consider the shape or size of objects that they observe around them. The recent sponsored event to collect as many examples as possible of numbers 1 to 5 was used well not only to raise money for the school, but also to improve children's recognition of numbers. All teachers keep detailed records of the children's attainment, which contribute effectively to the very good progress that is made in this area of learning.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

69. In knowledge and understanding children are likely to attain expected standards by the time they are five. The school provides a wide range of experiences in this area and children make very good progress in this area of learning, which includes scientific, technological, geographical and historical learning.
70. In their topic on The Three Little Pigs, children examine the properties of different building materials. They observe bricks and tiles through magnifying lenses, demonstrating a developing scientific vocabulary as they describe their properties in terms such as rough and smooth. They are beginning to conduct simple investigations and record the results. For example, children constructed roofs of straw, sticks and bricks before attempting, in the same way as the Big Bad Wolf, to blow them down. With the teacher's help, they concluded that bricks are too strong to blow down and recorded the results of their experiment on a class chart. Children are beginning to understand that plants need light and water for growth. For example, they planted cress seeds and drew pictures to make a daily diary of their growth, before enjoying eating their results as egg and cress sandwiches. An annual visit to the local zoo serves to develop children's understanding of the wider world. They have a developing awareness of the area in which they live and have taken great interest in building work opposite the school. They are beginning to understand the external and internal features of houses. In the class planning office they study plans of houses, select templates of interior fittings and use them to draw simple plans. Children are beginning to develop a sense of the passage of time as they examine and paint Victorian artefacts. Through comparisons of photographs of themselves as babies and themselves now, they begin to understand the difference between then and now.
71. The children are always keen to try things out for themselves. For example they take great pleasure in building their own walls, using a mixture of glue and paint as the cement. Children use cutting, sticking and joining techniques as they select from a variety of materials to create their own collage pictures. When using the computer the majority of children are able to direct the mouse to change colour or to match one item to another.
72. The children's response in this area of learning is good. They are keen to participate in the planned activities and take great pride in their work as, for example, when they stick their bricks together successfully to make a wall. The majority of children listen carefully to adult's instructions and respond appropriately. They are willing to take turns and happy to include children who decide to join in with what is going on. They help to clear away at the end of the activity competently. Most children are able to sustain their concentration for long periods of time.
73. The teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is very good. Lessons are very well planned to include a wide range of innovative activities that ensure all children are highly challenged and very well motivated. Resources, such as magnifying glasses, are used very well to

extend learning. Teachers know the children very well and tailor the activities to suit their individual needs. The good use of questioning encourages children to widen their vocabulary and extend their knowledge. Teachers keep detailed records of the children's work. These records are used well to ensure that all children receive the same experiences and all are making good progress.

### **Physical development**

74. Standards of attainment in physical development are in line with the national agreed levels by the time they are five. They make good progress in the nursery. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
75. Children run, skip and jump outside showing a good awareness of space and of others. They move around the playground with very good control and exercise on the climbing frame confidently. Many swing from bar to bar on the climbing frame with developing competence. Most children balance on the stepping blocks positively and throw a beanbag into the hoop with increasing accuracy. In circle games children can follow instructions well and are confident to do actions such as jumping up and down on the spot, pretending to brush their teeth and stamp their feet.
76. They ride bikes very well and, in this area of physical development, children are attaining above average standards. Most can drive their vehicles skilfully into parking places and stop at the traffic lights. They carefully take passengers on their bikes. Where children's skills of pedalling are less well developed they receive very good support from staff to help them achieve.
77. In the large construction area children use large wooden blocks with confidence and follow plans to represent the layout of a bathroom. They use the large spade carefully to lift the bricks and play very imaginatively on the "Building Site". They also manipulate and mould clay well and use the appropriate tools skilfully for the details when making clay models of pigs. The children use a range of tools with confidence, handling brushes, scissors, pens and pencils with increasing control.
78. Children have very positive attitudes to learning and enjoy the wide range of physical activities offered to them. The behaviour is very good. They co-operate and share the equipment very well.
79. The quality of teaching is very good with high expectations. The area of learning in physical development is planned very well to ensure that the children make very good progress in developing their skills. Adults give very good individual support to children. There is a very good range of planned activities outside for the children and their needs are well catered for in an attractive safe environment. However, indoor physical education activities are less well developed, mainly due to the lack of space. Children with special educational needs are well supported and make very good progress. The co-ordinator monitors planning effectively and has an appropriate action plan to further develop this area of learning.

### **Creative development**

80. Entry records show that when many children come to nursery they have no understanding of how to use scissors, paint or glue and their experiences of imaginative play and music making are limited. Children make very good progress in this area of learning and, by the time they leave the nursery, most have achieved nationally agreed standards for their age.
81. Children use their imaginations well to act out their ideas in a variety of situations and act out both traditional stories and everyday situations confidently. For example, children were observed within a play situation that was based on the "Three Little Pigs" and appropriate language was being used

in their acting. They were also observed acting out a “building site” scene that promoted successfully the planning skills they had discussed during the previous work.

82. In music sessions, children have access to a variety of unpitched percussion instruments and use these with confidence and developing skill. They enjoy exploring the variety of sounds that can be created from the range of multi-cultural instruments available to them. They respond very well to their teachers and show developing confidence and skill when they move to music. They also enjoy singing and action songs, which they do with enthusiasm, and remember all the words. A favourite is “Trotting down the road” which they perform with appropriate voices and very good expression.
83. They learn to use a wide range of materials with confidence and display appropriate skills in cutting, gluing and using tools for writing and drawing. Children also develop appropriate skills making imaginative three-dimensional models using recyclable materials. They mix their own paints to achieve chosen effects. For example, they know how to mix both red and white to make the correct shade of pink to paint pigs accurately.
84. Teaching is very good, with a wide range of activities provided which are well resourced. Adults support children well by extending their language appropriately and broadening their experiences. Children’s work is well displayed around the school and, whilst positively enhancing the environment, it also sets value on the children’s efforts and promotes their creative development. Assessments of the children’s creative development are kept through observational notes that inform the regular reporting process.