



Office for Standards
in Education

NURSERY INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY239560

DfES Number:

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 09/06/2004
Inspector Name Lisa Jane Faulkner

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type
Setting Name Sancton Wood School
Setting Address 1-2 St. Pauls Road
Cambridge
Cambridgeshire CB1 2EZ

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name

Address

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Sancton Wood School is a selective independent school which was founded in 1976. The nursery and infant school, together with the secondary school, occupy a large converted Victorian house near the centre of Cambridge, with the baby nursery in a new building next door. The junior school is in separate premises nearby. Pupils attend from Cambridge and from further afield.

The school accepts children from 1 to 16 years old. The baby nursery caters for the one to three-year-olds, and children move from the baby nursery and elsewhere into the nursery class of the infant school at three years old. There are currently 55 children in the infant school, of whom 30 are in the reception and nursery classes. This includes 10 funded three-year-olds and 14 funded four-year-olds. There are currently no children in receipt of nursery education funding who have special educational needs.

The school is open from 08:00 to 17:00, with the nursery and reception day beginning at 09:00 and ending at 15:15. Nursery children attend mainly on a part-time basis, and reception children are full-time.

Two part-time qualified teachers work in the nursery, assisted by two full-time qualified nursery nurses. Two part-time qualified teachers work in the reception class, with part-time classroom assistant support. The school receives support from a mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for Foundation Stage education at Sancton Wood School is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals and very good progress towards most.

Teaching is generally good, with some very good aspects. Staff have a clear awareness of how children learn, and as a result they provide practical, meaningful, and exciting activities for the children. This makes sure that children are independent and motivated in their learning. High staffing ratios enable children to receive a good level of individual attention, and staff spend lots of time talking to the children to extend their language and thinking skills. All staff are clear about their role and responsibilities; however, there is scope for further improvement in the planning for the deployment of the support staff in the nursery in order to further support children's learning during free-play sessions.

Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and they use this knowledge to formulate comprehensive and effective planning across all areas of children's learning. They make particularly good use of ongoing assessments and observations of children's progress to plan for the next steps for each child's learning.

Leadership and management is generally good. The good appraisal system effectively supports the delivery of the curriculum and teacher's practice, and there are plans to extend this system to include the support staff. There is a clear commitment to continual improvement of the educational provision, and the staff team are enthusiastic about seeking out new ideas. The classes within the Foundation stage are not yet fully co-ordinated in working with each other to dovetail planning and practice.

The partnership with parents is very good. Parents are very well informed about the curriculum and about their child's progress. Excellent systems are in place to encourage parents to be involved in their child's learning.

What is being done well?

- The provision of practical and meaningful activities in the nursery means that children are excited and motivated to learn. This ensures that they make rapid progress in more formal learning in the reception year.
- Children are happy and secure, and show a strong sense of community.
- Children are highly imaginative and creative; in their use of language, their role-play, and their art and design.

- Staff make very good use of assessments and observations to plan for the next steps for children's learning. This means that children's individual development and learning needs are well met.
- The school works very closely in partnership with parents to support children's learning.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of the Foundation stage as a distinct phase, in planning and teaching
- in the nursery, to extend the role of the support staff during free play

What has improved since the last inspection?

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection. Assessments of children's progress are now manageable and are well used to plan for the next steps for children's learning.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and independent; they choose and extend their own activities and this is well-supported by staff. They are developing a purposeful and motivated approach to learning, and show excitement and curiosity in the activities provided. This means that they are able to concentrate and persevere for sustained periods, for example, when making their information books in the reception class. Praise and encouragement from staff results in children developing high self-esteem.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident speakers, using an exceptionally expressive and imaginative vocabulary. They show a clear understanding of story structures; they listen with enjoyment at group story time, often predicting what might happen next, and they develop advanced storylines in their play. In reception, children are enthusiastic about reading, and talk with each other about the stories they have read. Children's writing skills are effectively supported, so that their writing progresses rapidly.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

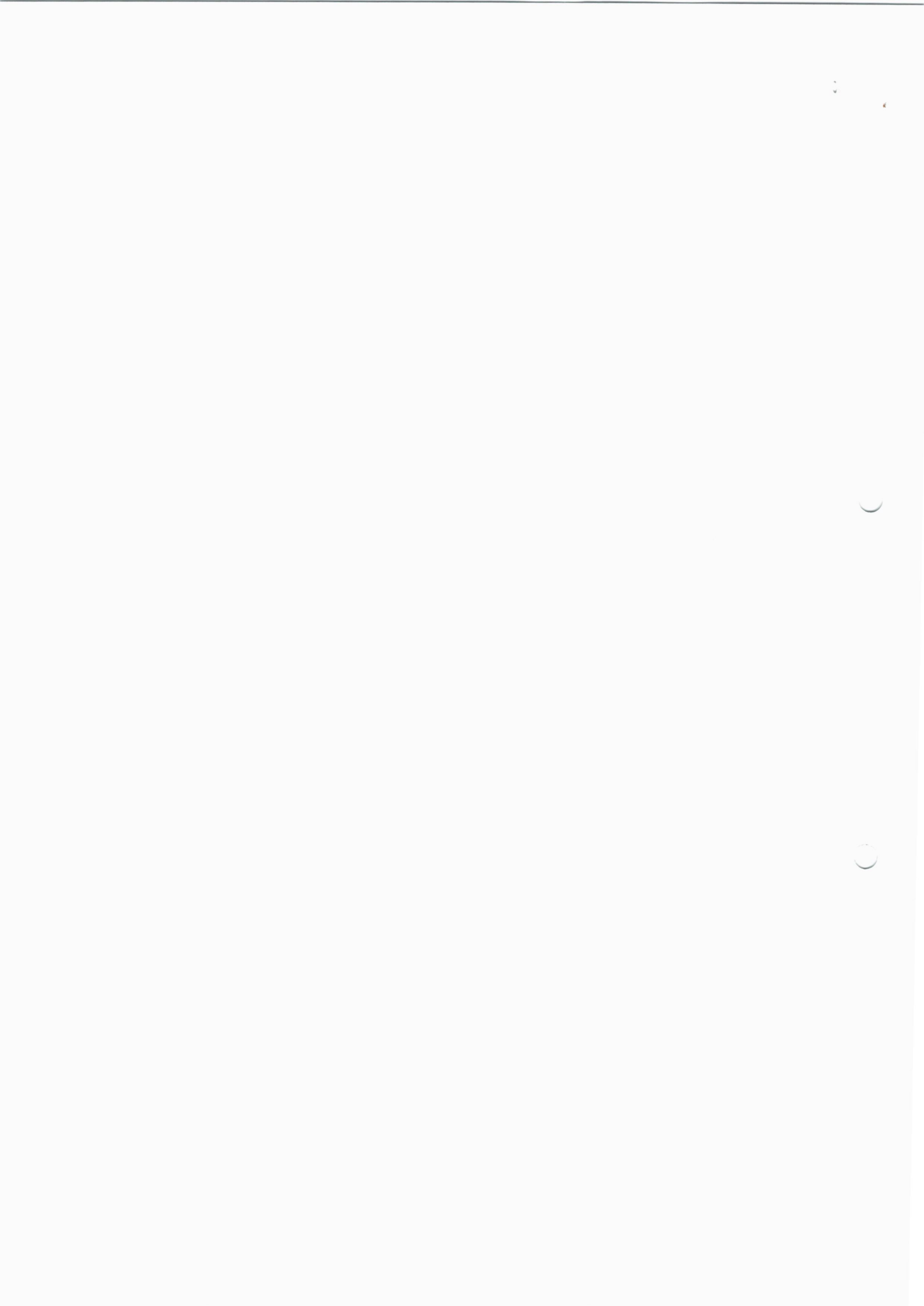
Judgement: Generally Good

Children's mathematical language is progressing well; they show a sound understanding of position, shape and size. The provision of practical activities in the nursery enables children to gain a secure grasp of mathematical concepts, so that in the reception year their knowledge of number and counting progresses rapidly.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are learning about their local and wider community through well-planned topics, regular trips out, and visitors to the nursery. They are learning to understand and respect other cultures through activities such as cooking Indian food, or dancing the Chinese Dragon dance. Children are proficient at using the computer, and other programmable toys. They enjoy looking closely at the natural world; planting vegetables in the garden and watching caterpillars and tadpoles in the classroom.



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	
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Judgement:	Very Good
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Children show a good sense of space, and control and co-ordination, whilst playing in the well-equipped outdoor play area. They climb and balance on the wooden dragon, negotiate pathways on wheeled toys, and move safely around the fixed play equipment. They are developing a good awareness of keeping themselves healthy, and of staying safe in the sun. In the nursery, they have very good opportunities to handle a range of tools and materials to develop their fine manipulative skills.

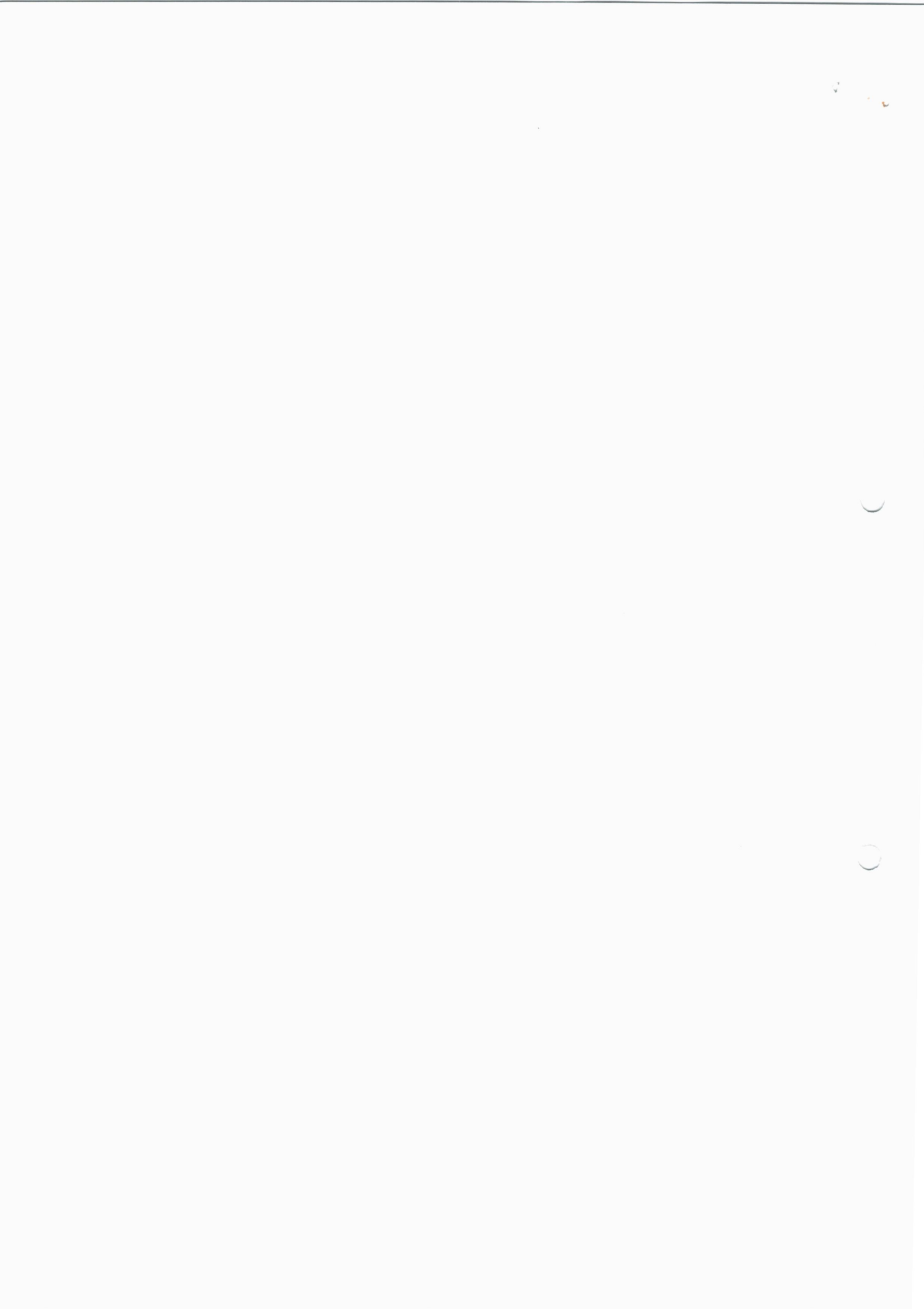
CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
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Judgement:	Very Good
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Children's imagination is successfully fostered in all aspects of their play. This leads to exceptionally expressive language, highly-developed story telling skills in the role play areas, and dynamic expressive art and craft. Children are developing an understanding and appreciation of music through well-planned lessons which progress from looking at loud and soft instruments in the nursery to interpreting pieces of music in reception.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately:
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Yes



OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT

(Key issues or points for consideration for improvement in nursery education)

work towards establishing the Foundation Stage as a distinct phase, with close liaison between staff in planning and practice.

extend the role of the support staff during free play sessions in the nursery.

The registered person must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents, and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next combined inspection.

