

INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10 OF
SCHOOL INSPECTIONS ACT, 1996

CAIA PARK NURSERY SCHOOL

Prince Charles Road
Queen's Park
Wrexham, LL13 8TH

School Number: 665/1007

Date of Inspection: 7th - 9th April, 2003

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REGISTERED INSPECTOR: WO50/15890

16th May, 2003

UNDER ESTYN CONTRACT NUMBER: T/185/02P

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CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES

A new nomenclature to describe pupils' progress through school was introduced in 1989. This system of numbering year-groups from the start of compulsory schooling to the age of eighteen is intended to ease communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and local education authorities and to emphasise the importance of continuity.

The term "reception" is applied to the year-group of pupils in a primary school (not a nursery class) who attain the age of five during the academic year. "Year 1" (Y1) is applied to the year-group of pupils who attain the age of six during the academic year and so on to Y13 – the year-group who attain the age of eighteen during the academic year.

	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Years	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum consists of Y1 and Y2; Key Stage 2 of Y3 to Y6; Key Stage 3 of Y7 to Y9; Key Stage 4 of Y10 and Y11 (which is the final year of compulsory education).

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

The following five-point grading scale is used to represent the main judgments in the report:

1. **Very good** : many good features, some of them outstanding
2. **Good** : good features and no major shortcomings
3. **Satisfactory** : good features outweigh shortcomings
4. **Unsatisfactory** : some satisfactory work but shortcomings in important areas
5. **Poor** : many shortcomings.

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1. CONTEXT

The School and its Priorities

Caia Park Nursery School is situated in a large post-war council housing estate, some two miles east of the centre of Wrexham.

Currently, the school has a total roll of twenty-eight children aged three to four years, all of whom attend on a mornings-only basis. Included in this number are six children with special educational needs who have been admitted under the local education authority's arrangements for special provision in the area.

In general terms, the area served by the school can be described as economically disadvantaged. Many children enter the school with relatively low attainments, including underdeveloped language skills.

English is the sole or predominant home language in all cases. No child comes from a Welsh-speaking home or speaks Welsh fluently. Approximately 10% of pupils come from ethnic-minority families.

The school has produced a succinct statement of aims, which reads as follows:

We aim to provide a secure, happy and stimulating environment in which each child can achieve his or her potential physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually and morally.

We aim through the Nursery Curriculum and High/Scope method of teaching by supported active learning to foster independent self-reliant children who have enquiring minds, are able to solve problems and reflect upon their own learning.

We regard the child as a unique individual within the school but seek and value partnership with families. The Nursery works to ensure positive links are established between home and Nursery and Nursery and school, sharing concerns and celebrating achievements.

No changes have been made to the type or age-range of the school in recent years. The present headteacher has been in post in an acting capacity since September, 1998.

The school was last inspected during the summer term, 1997.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The Main Findings of the Report

This is a very well-organised, properly-managed school, with a dedicated and highly-capable headteacher and staff. No effort is spared to advance children's development and progress.

Educational Standards Achieved by Pupils

- * During the inspection, standards of educational achievement were satisfactory or better in all of the sessions seen, including 67% where they were good and 8% where they were very good. Standards in the six areas of learning are currently the following:

Area of Learning	Standard of Achievement
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills	Satisfactory
Personal and Social Development	Good
Mathematical Development	Satisfactory
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Very Good
Physical Development	Very Good
Creative Development	Good

- * In general, children are making sound progress in developing key skills across the curriculum. Standards of achievement in this area are satisfactory overall.

Ethos of the School

- * Very good provision is made for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Due emphasis is placed on helping children develop a sense of spiritual awareness appropriate to their age, with studies in science and nature fostering a sense of awe and wonder of the world. Relationships are very good at all levels. Very good attention is paid to cultural development, with children regularly hearing about Welsh characters and personalities and celebrating festivals such as St. David's Day. Welsh is used incidentally on a daily basis, with children confidently singing songs in the language and greeting each other in Welsh at the beginning of the day. Appropriate attention is also given to other customs and cultures, with celebrations of events such as Divali and the Chinese New Year.
- * Behaviour and attitudes are good overall. Learning takes place in a stimulating, well-ordered environment, where children feel happy and confident and are encouraged to learn for themselves. Staff handle situations calmly but firmly when occasional difficulties arise. Most children eagerly participate in activities and listen intently both in large and small-group situations. A small minority occasionally lose interest and become restless, particularly towards the end of the first session, which generally lasts half an hour or more.
- * Very good attempts are made by the school to secure the regular and punctual attendance of children. Most parents offer the school their full co-operation, although rates are

depressed by a small number of children who do not attend on a regular basis.

Quality of Education

- * All teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory or better. Standards were satisfactory in approximately 21% of lessons, good in 67%, and very good in 12% where some exceptional features were seen.
- * Relationships between staff and children are very good in all cases. Children, as a result, feel secure and confident, with most responding well to the warm, friendly, caring environment.
- * Planning is very detailed and clearly identifies objectives in each of the six areas of learning. Teaching and support staff work well with each other, planning closely together as a team and showing sound knowledge and understanding of how children learn at this level.
- * Effective use is made of resources to stimulate interest and promote enjoyment. Careful thought is given to ways of making learning both challenging and exciting. Outdoor activities are of a particularly high quality.
- * Very good procedures have been adopted for assessing, recording and reporting on children's progress.
- * Detailed policies and schemes of work form the basis of a very rich curriculum. The school provides children with a broad range of experiences which fully accord with the *Desirable Outcomes for Learning*.
- * Very good arrangements are in place for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils. The headteacher and staff are very sensitive to children's needs, and work hard to ensure that individuals are properly helped and supported.
- * Good progress is made by all pupils with special educational needs during the year they spend in the school. Provision is very good overall.
- * A very good partnership has been established with parents, the community, and other schools and institutions. Parents have a high regard for the school and greatly appreciate the work of the headteacher and staff. Very positive views were expressed at the pre-inspection meeting and in written responses to the questionnaire devised by Estyn.
- * Good links have also been established with industry.

Management

- * Very good procedures are in place to enable the school to evaluate its own work and to plan for improvement.
- * Leadership and efficiency are very good overall. Committed and caring leadership is

provided by the headteacher, who is very hard-working and has a clear vision of what she wishes to achieve for the school.

- * Day-to-day administration is smooth and efficient. Meticulous records, in particular, are kept of every aspect of each child's development.
- * As a nursery, the school has no governing body, but valuable support is received from a small management committee which meets on a regular basis.
- * The budget is controlled by the local education authority, apart from monies for capitation and in-service training, which are delegated to the headteacher and managed efficiently.
- * Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are very good overall.

Progress since the Last Inspection

- * Good progress has been made overall in dealing with the key issues from the last inspection.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards Achieved in Subjects and Areas of Learning

During the inspection, standards of educational achievement were satisfactory all of the sessions seen, including 67% where they were good and 8% where they were very good.

- * Children, in many instances, enter the school with relatively low attainments. Good to very good progress is generally made during their year in the nursery.
- * Standards of educational achievement are currently satisfactory overall in mathematical development and language, literacy and communication skills; good in personal and social development, and creative development; and very good in physical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world.
- * All children make progress commensurate with their abilities.

3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum

In general, pupils are making sound progress in developing key skills across the curriculum. Standards of achievement in this area are satisfactory overall.

- * Listening skills are generally good. Given their young age, children are learning to concentrate appropriately and to absorb what they hear. Suitable understanding is shown of commands and instructions.

- * Numerous opportunities are provided for children to develop their speaking skills by talking to adults and each other. Some children, although articulating words clearly, are experiencing difficulty in using language effectively. Speaking skills, at the current time, are satisfactory overall.
- * Satisfactory progress is made in early literacy skills. Children can sequence well-known stories, turn pages and recognise characters in books. Growing recognition is shown of the fact that print has significance and is capable of meaning. Fine motor skills are developing well. Children receive regular opportunities for mark-making and are acquiring increasing control over the use and handling of implements. Daily planning fosters the development of skills and is one of the major strengths of the school. Standards in pre-reading and writing skills are currently satisfactory overall.
- * Key skills in the use and application of number are developing satisfactorily. Good opportunities are provided for children to learn to count through singing rhymes and songs during large-circle times and counting objects such as frogs in the water tray. Effective use is made of snack times to help children count out plates and to ensure that one is placed in front of each pupil. Games encourage children to look out for numbers and to match items to a set number of objects. Children also count people and objects they hear about in stories. Good advantage is taken of opportunities to count in Welsh at the beginning of the day.
- * Skills in information and communications technology are also developing satisfactorily. Children enjoy listening to taped music and stories, and many can operate the tape-recorder independently. Good use is made of computers to support learning in literacy and number, whilst an interesting graphics programme helps to develop good hand-eye co-ordination. Children can use both the mouse and the keyboard, and enjoy colouring and drawing. Most can select the appropriate tool, and colour for themselves. Many know the steps to print out their own work.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Very good provision is made for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- * Due emphasis is placed on helping children develop a sense of spiritual awareness appropriate to their age. Full advantage is taken of festivals such as Christmas and Easter to acquaint children with Bible stories and to enact events for parents and other members of their families. Simple prayers are said before the commencement of snacks.
- * Studies in science and nature help to develop a sense of awe and wonder of the world. Great enjoyment is obtained from activities such as finding tiny creatures in a box of earth, or guessing and discovering what might be found inside an Easter egg.

- * Relationships are very good at all levels. Children work and play harmoniously with each other, willingly sharing toys and equipment and collaborating in role play in the "vet's surgery" and home corner.
- * Social and personal skills are developing well. Children learn to share and take turns, and to show respect for the environment. Snack breaks are used to maximum advantage to foster social and linguistic development. The *helpwr heddiw* gives out the milk, whilst the rest of the children help with activities such as filling pitta pockets with cheese and coleslaw.
- * Visits to the community help children to learn about the world around them and the work undertaken by different people such as the postman, dentist and fireman. Good use is made of talks by visitors to help broaden children's knowledge and experience.
- * Welsh is used incidentally on a daily basis, with children confidently singing songs in the language and greeting each other in Welsh at the beginning of the day. Learning is well reinforced by wall displays and labels.
- * Very good attention is paid to cultural development, with children regularly hearing about Welsh characters and personalities and celebrating festivals such as St. David's Day. Effective use is made of the occasion to help children learn about aspects such as the national costume and symbols of Wales.
- * Appropriate attention is also given to other customs and cultures, with celebrations of events such as Divali and the Chinese New Year. Good support is received from parents in areas such as cooking so that children can sample different kinds of food. Work is characterised by many very good features.

4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes

Behaviour and attitudes are good overall.

- * An appropriate policy has been drawn up to encourage good behaviour. Guidelines are carefully followed by all members of staff.
- * Learning takes place in a stimulating, well-ordered environment, where children feel happy and confident and are encouraged to learn for themselves.
- * Routines are properly understood and accepted by children, with the vast majority responding well to their teachers' expectations.
- * Staff handle situations calmly but firmly when occasional difficulties arise.
- * Most children eagerly participate in activities and listen intently both in large and small-group situations. A small minority occasionally lose interest and become restless, particularly towards the end of the first session, which generally lasts half an hour or more.

- * Good behaviour is regularly praised and rewarded. Children value the stickers and verbal encouragement they receive.
- * Parents are pleased with standards of behaviour in the school and consider that good attention is given to children's personal and social development.

4.3 Attendance

Very good attempts are made by the school to secure the regular and punctual attendance of children, although rates are unsatisfactory overall.

- * As attendance at school is not compulsory for children under five years of age, the school can only impress upon parents the advantages of regular nursery education and encourage them to ensure that their children receive maximum benefits from the provision.
- * Most parents offer the school their full co-operation. Rates, however, are depressed by a small number of children who do not attend on a regular basis.
- * A substantial number of children are absent at any given time, meaning that opportunities for development are not fully exploited and a valuable resource is not used to maximum advantage.
- * Registers are promptly completed at the start of the session and retained in the school office during the day.
- * Absence is carefully monitored to identify trends and to seek ways of securing improvements.
- * Punctuality at the start of the day varies considerably, with many parents arriving after the closure of the register and children often missing the large-circle-time session.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

All teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory or better. Standards were satisfactory in approximately 21% of lessons, good in 67%, and very good in 12% where some exceptional features were seen.

- * Relationships between staff and children are very good in all cases. Children, as a result, feel secure and confident, with most responding well to the warm, friendly, caring environment.
- * Teaching and support staff work well with each other, planning closely together as a

team and showing sound knowledge and understanding of how children learn at this level.

- * The principles and practices of High Scope are faithfully observed. Learning is well balanced and structured.
- * Planning is very detailed and clearly identifies objectives in each of the six areas of learning.
- * Staff display very good knowledge of the children and set appropriate targets for development. Each child's progress is meticulously assessed, with all members of staff contributing to the process.
- * Strong emphasis is placed on the constant reinforcement and development of language skills. Small-group sessions are of a size which gives all children equal opportunities to contribute and gain confidence in speech.
- * Snack times are pleasurable, family-orientated occasions and are well used to foster the social development of children.
- * Staff deal calmly and sensitively with potentially difficult behaviour. Much praise is given to build up self-esteem and confidence.
- * Effective use is made of resources to stimulate interest and promote enjoyment. Careful thought is given to ways of making learning both challenging and exciting. Outdoor activities are of a particularly high quality.
- * Very good use is made of carefully-planned visits to enhance and extend children's experiences. Talks by visitors also make a significant contribution to children's knowledge and understanding.

5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Very good procedures have been adopted for assessing, recording and reporting on children's progress.

- * High Scope assessment procedures provide staff with very detailed information about children's attainments on entry to the school. Details are transferred to the local education authority's "Travelling Together" document to form the basis of a system for tracking progress throughout the school year. Very good use is made of the information to ensure that teaching and learning are properly matched to individual needs and abilities.
- * Targets are set for children in language, literacy and communication, mathematical development, and personal and social education, and are formally reviewed at the end of the second school term.
- * Progress is continuously and systematically assessed at the end of each morning after children have returned to their homes. Very good use is made of these meetings to ensure

that appropriate tasks are presented to all children.

- * The results of daily observation and assessment are thoroughly and methodically recorded. High Scope record books are well used for the purpose.
- * All members of staff display very good knowledge and understanding of the children. Effective assistance is provided in helping children to plan their tasks for the morning and in discussing what they have learned at the end of group sessions. Large-circle times provide good opportunities for the assessment of learning.
- * Two meetings are held each year to enable parents to discuss their children's progress. One meeting is formal and the other, an informal coffee morning. Parents are also encouraged to visit the nursery at any time if there is a matter they wish to discuss.
- * All children have an individual profile of work showing their progress in each area of learning. Profiles contain annotated samples of work which demonstrate in a meaningful way the progress children have made since entry. Files are taken home following a celebration session attended by parents at the end of the school year.
- * Annual reports to parents are very good and fully comply with statutory requirements. Reports are issued at the end of the spring term to help with preparation for transfer to infant schools.

5.3 Curriculum

The school provides children with a broad range of experiences which fully accord with the *Desirable Outcomes for Learning*.

- * Detailed policies and schemes of work form the basis of a very rich curriculum.
- * Children are presented with a variety of stimulating and exciting experiences, which are well designed to meet their individual needs.
- * Very good attention is given to ensuring that children are well integrated into groups and receive individual support when required. Equal opportunities are provided in all areas of learning.
- * Teachers' long- and medium-term planning is of very good quality and is effectively supported through the High Scope methods of delivery. Children enjoy choosing their own activities, and work purposefully with those who have made the same choice. Staff ensure that all children follow a broad curriculum throughout the week.
- * Weekly short-term planning indicates objectives for learning, together with the range of experiences to be given and the resources used. Daily planning follows the High Scope timetable, enabling children and staff to interact meaningfully as the morning proceeds. No time is wasted at all.

- * Effective use is made of visits to develop children's confidence and to enhance their knowledge and understanding of topics.
- * Very good arrangements are made for personal and social education.
- * Less effective procedures are in place for developing key skills across the curriculum.

5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare

Overall, very good provision is made for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils.

- * Learning takes place in a happy, secure, close-knit environment, in which very good attention is given to the well-being of children.
- * The headteacher and staff are very sensitive to children's needs, and work hard to ensure that individuals are properly helped and supported.
- * Good knowledge is shown of children and their families. Effective use is made of external agencies to provide support where necessary.
- * All members of staff have received appropriate training in child protection and know the procedures to be followed if any concern arises. Good account is taken of the policies of the local education authority, although the school currently has no policy or guidelines of its own listing points of contact and individuals who have specific responsibilities.
- * A responsible attitude is taken to matters of health and safety. Risks have been properly assessed, although a full review has not recently been undertaken.
- * Very good measures are in place to ensure the safety of the children and the security of the building.

5.5 Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Overall, very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.

- * Currently, six children are at the "school action" stage of the revised national Code of Practice and seven at "school action plus".
- * Six children, whose specific needs have been identified before entry to school, attend the nursery as part of the local education authority's special provision for the area.
- * Statutory assessment procedures have been initiated in respect of the special needs of four children.
- * Staff ensure that all children have a wide range of experiences during the week and that each follows the full curriculum for children under five. All activities fully support children's learning and are interesting and meaningful.

- * Children are fully included in all aspects of school life. The High Scope philosophy ensures that they plan appropriately for activities and make their own choices about learning.
- * In general, very good support is provided to ensure that children make appropriate progress in each of the six areas of learning. Appropriate strategies, however, are not always followed to ensure that children with more challenging difficulties do not impede the learning of others.
- * All children are assessed on entry to the school. Where appropriate, the school uses materials supplementary to the authority's initial profile to gain more detailed knowledge of specific needs. Individual educational plans are drawn up for all children and reviewed each half-term to ensure that each child is making appropriate progress.
- * Good support is received from a wide range of outside agencies, including the speech therapist who assists with the content of individual educational plans and regularly visits the school to help children with the development of spoken language.
- * Effective use is made of Makaton sign language to enhance communication and to develop speech, where appropriate. Children's communication skills are developing well.
- * Parents are fully involved in the life of the school and attend meetings to discuss individual educational plans and the progress made by their children.
- * Exemplary relationships have been established between staff and children. Very good support is provided by the two nursery nurses appointed to work with specific children.
- * Children relate well with each other.
- * Very good procedures are in place to monitor, assess and record each child's progress. Information is well used to match teaching to needs. Meticulous records are kept by the special-educational-needs co-ordinator.
- * Much benefit is received from visits to places of interest in the community and further afield.
- * Good progress is made by all pupils with special educational needs during the year they spend in the school.

5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions

A very good partnership has been established with parents, the community, and other schools and institutions.

- * Parents have a high regard for the school and greatly appreciate the work of the headteacher and staff. Very positive views were expressed at the pre-inspection meeting and in written responses to the questionnaire devised by Estyn.

- * Staff are regarded as very friendly and approachable, and always ready to discuss any matters related to the education and welfare of children. Parents value the "open-door" access they have to the school.
- * Close liaison takes place between the traveller-support teacher and the families of travellers' children.
- * Very good information is provided for parents. Regular newsletters deal with items such as activities and achievements, and dates of forthcoming visits and celebrations.
- * A number of parents help in the classroom or provide assistance with school visits and excursions.
- * The school also provides considerable support and encouragement for parents by caring for children during a "back-into-learning" programme.
- * Senior citizens from a neighbouring luncheon club visit the school to be entertained by children.
- * The community council helped to fund events to celebrate last year's golden jubilee, whilst a local supermarket provided monies to mark the re-opening of the school following damage by intruders.
- * A community award has helped the school to acquire extra equipment for the benefit of children. Good use has been made of monies to meet special needs, particularly in areas such as speaking and listening, expressive communication and the development of fine and gross motor skills.
- * Very good arrangements are made for a smooth transition to primary education. Children visit their new schools prior to transfer and attend assemblies with reception pupils. Good liaison takes place with relevant members of staff.
- * Students from the North-East Wales Institute and other schools gain valuable training experience at the school.
- * The school also acts as a training centre for teachers in the philosophy and methods of High Scope.

5.7 Partnership with Industry

Good links have been established with industry.

- * Visits to places such as the dentist's and veterinary surgery help to raise children's awareness of the world of work.
- * Valuable contributions are also made by visitors to the school, who talk to children about their occupations and experiences.

- * Links with the Groundwork Trust and the Forestry Commission have enhanced children's knowledge and learning, and helped them to appreciate the countryside and local environment.
- * Good financial and other support has been received from a national supermarket chain.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement

Very good procedures are in place to enable the school to evaluate its own work and to plan for improvement.

- * The headteacher and staff have been very successful in creating a self-critical culture, with the aim of making constant improvements to standards of teaching and learning.
- * All members of staff have helped to produce a self-evaluation report covering all aspects of the life and work of the school and clearly analysing its strengths and weaknesses.
- * The school development plan is a sound working document setting out clear priorities for improvement and paying good attention to staff development as a means of pursuing and achieving targets. Progress is carefully monitored and reviewed.
- * Meticulous use is made of a baseline profile to assess children's attainments on entry to the school and to match teaching to needs and abilities.
- * Staff collaborate effectively with each other in monitoring and assessing standards in each area of learning and evaluating children's progress throughout their period in the school.

6.2 Leadership and Efficiency

Leadership and efficiency are very good overall.

- * The school has a suitable set of aims and objectives, which are rigorously pursued and largely achieved.
- * Committed and caring leadership is provided by the headteacher, who is very hard-working and has a clear vision of what she wishes to achieve for the school.
- * Exemplary relationships have been established at all levels. A close team spirit is one of the major strengths of the school.
- * Parents are very supportive and greatly appreciate the commitment of the headteacher

and staff. Strong evidence of such support was provided during a recent difficult period when two intruders entered the building and caused much damage to facilities and equipment.

- * Day-to-day administration is smooth and efficient. Meticulous records, in particular, are kept of every aspect of each child's development.
- * As a nursery, the school has no governing body, but valuable support is received from a small management committee which meets on a regular basis.
- * The budget is controlled by the local education authority apart from monies for capitation and in-service training, which are delegated to the headteacher and managed efficiently.
- * Regular, good-quality in-service training is provided for all members of staff.

6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are very good overall.

- * The school is very well staffed, with appropriately-qualified teachers, nursery nurses and a part-time support worker.
- * Staff have a good overall balance of experiences to deliver the curriculum for children of this age.
- * All members of staff work very well with each other to plan work, assess achievement and to provide appropriate support for children. Commitment, dedication and effective team work are strong features of the school.
- * The building provides a bright, cheerful, welcoming environment. Classroom provision is well organised into different areas of learning to ensure that children have access to a full range of activities.
- * Good support is received from the cleaners, who keep the interior of the premises spotlessly clean.
- * Improvements have been made to the outside area to provide an adventure playground, a garden, and hard play surfaces where children can use large wheeled toys in safety. Very good use is made of the facility.
- * The school garden is properly maintained and well used to develop a sense of scientific enquiry and promote children's physical development.
- * Learning resources are very good overall and fully accessible to children. Staff ensure that they are used to maximum advantage.
- * Good use is made of a listening centre and computers to enhance children's learning.

7. AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards Achieved by Pupils

Language, Literacy and Communication Skills

Many children enter the nursery with limited language skills. Most make good progress and achieve levels of attainment commensurate with their abilities. Standards in this area are satisfactory overall, and good in some cases.

Good Features

- * The majority of children listen attentively, both during circle times and small-group sessions.
- * Strong emphasis is placed upon the development of language. Staff plan work well and encourage children to talk about their tasks and experiences. Plenary sessions provide suitable opportunities for the recall and discussion of activities.
- * Children understand what is required of them, and can follow instructions and hold a simple conversation with adults. A number of more able children speak clearly and confidently. Conversations with adults are very well sustained in such cases.
- * Snack times provide good opportunities for children to relate their personal news and experiences and to assimilate vocabulary associated with the food they eat and prepare. Adults make effective use of language to extend children's knowledge and understanding.
- * Most pupils are able to hold telephone conversations during role play and to talk naturally to each other.
- * Each morning, before the start of the session, children turn naturally to books and show a developing interest in literature. Most are able to turn pages correctly and to follow stories from pictures.
- * Effective use is made of "Big Books" to stimulate interest and to sequence stories. Children can follow well-known tales such as "The Three Little Pigs", recognise and talk about characters, and say what comes next in the story.
- * Stories form the basis of other areas of work. An attractive and meaningful corner, for example, displays themes from "The Wind in the Willows".
- * Children participate confidently in action songs and well-know nursery rhymes.
- * A good foundation is laid for oral work in Welsh. Children respond to greetings and are beginning to understand simple instructions such as *Rowch y llyfr ar y silff*. Songs in the

- language are sung with enthusiasm.
- * Suitable experiences are provided every day for children to make marks with different implements and to improve hand-eye co-ordination through painting, drawing and making notes for the vet. Children also plan their own activities in accordance with the practices of High Scope.
 - * Evidence indicates that children undertake a suitable range of pre-writing activities, including pattern work, tracing and left-to-right orientation. Most children can manipulate crayons, pencils and paint brushes satisfactorily.
 - * Letter formation is at different stages of development, with one or two children writing their own names. Meticulous records are kept of progress so that staff can plan the next stages in learning.
 - * Good use is made of information and communications technology in areas such as the identification of rhymes and the sequencing of pictures.

Shortcomings

- * The first session of the day, although varied, is too long for some children, with evidence of restlessness and loss of concentration.
- * During the inspection, insufficient use was made of puppetry to prompt and develop speech.
- * The quality of discussion varies considerably during recall sessions. Many children need a great deal of prompting and time for responses.

Personal and Social Development

Very good progress is made in personal and social development. Standards of achievement in this area are good overall.

Good Features

- * Well-established routines help children to develop self-awareness and confidence and to acquire a growing sense of responsibility for planning their learning.
- * Children show a keen interest in their work and have the confidence to make and stand by their own choice of activities. They also feel confident about returning to their teachers to alter their plans for the morning.
- * Most concentrate well when listening to stories or singing songs and number rhymes.
- * Very good relationships have been established within the classroom. Children respond well to adults and play harmoniously with each other, waiting to take turns and sharing toys and equipment.

- * Strong emphasis is placed on caring for others and kindness to animals. Children look after toy pets during role play in the "surgery", examining them for injuries and binding up their wounds.
- * Good understanding is being acquired of the differences between right and wrong. Children respect each other's choices and amicably share each learning area with those who have chosen to use it.
- * Visits to places of interest enhance learning throughout the curriculum and provide opportunities for social interaction outside the school setting. Parents join visits to places such as the local supermarket and dentist, and provide good support and a sense of security for children.
- * Good arrangements are in place to promote the Welsh language and *cwricwlwm Cymreig*. Children are developing an appropriate knowledge of their own heritage and culture.
- * All children are given appropriate responsibilities, which they try to carry out sensibly and effectively, especially those who are responsible for the *helpwr heddiw*. The majority tidy up willingly after activities, although one or two are sometimes successful in avoiding the task.

Shortcomings

- * On occasions, some children need encouragement or prompting to respond to routines.

Mathematical Development

Sound progress is made in mathematical development. Standards of achievement are commensurate with children's abilities and are satisfactory overall.

Good Features

- * A good range of activities helps children to acquire mathematical concepts and language. Understanding of prepositions such as "like", "up", "under" and "down" assists in the development of spatial relationships.
- * Sound emphasis is placed on meaningful sand and water play. Staff help children to count through everyday activities, with most being able to count by rote to four.
- * Good use is made of number songs and rhymes to develop understanding of addition and subtraction.
- * With help from an adult, children are generally able to match objects by colour and size, and show an early understanding of matching pairs.

- * Children benefit from the High Scope philosophy of planning their own choice of activities, and learn to anticipate and think ahead.
- * Effective use is made of computers to extend and consolidate learning.

Shortcomings

- * Only a few children can name colours accurately.
- * Although most children can match like numbers, few can name numbers within the range they know by rote.
- * Skills in using mathematical language are underdeveloped. Children are generally not able to talk about shapes, although many can pick out a circle, triangle and square. Progress, in many cases, is affected by initial problems with speech.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Very good progress is being made in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world. Standards of achievement in this area are also very good overall.

Good Features

- * Most children can talk briefly about topics such as their pets and families and recall experiences during activities in role play.
- * Very good use is made of visits in the locality and further afield to broaden children's knowledge and understanding. During the inspection, for example, a visit to the dentist's enabled children to gain first-hand experiences of the surgery and to ask questions about what they saw and heard. Much useful knowledge was obtained, including ways of keeping teeth healthy.
- * Visitors to the school make a valuable contribution to learning and enhance children's knowledge of the world of work. Role play shows a growing understanding of the people who help them, with children bandaging toy pets, for example, in the "vet's surgery" and realising the need to take care of animals. During repairs to the nursery following the damage caused by intruders, children were given opportunities to observe the skills of painters and joiners.
- * An interest table provides children with opportunities to investigate and use items such as magnifying glasses. Good attention is paid to natural science. Children grow plants and realise that they need water for healthy development. Good use is made of the outside garden area. A wormery provides opportunities for children to observe worms and centipedes and to learn the importance of handling creatures with sensitivity and care. Observation periods are characterised by interest, curiosity and enthusiasm. All children enjoy the experiences, with some asking questions, although many say little.

- * Regular experiences are provided in cooking activities. During the inspection, children prepared snacks with various types of fillings and enjoyed discussing different flavours and tastes.
- * Children show good awareness of changes in nature such as day and night, the seasons, and the need for appropriate clothing in different weather conditions.
- * Good attention is paid to helping children to understand their own culture and the various customs and practices of other nations. St. David's Day is well used to provide a focus for the customs of Wales, whilst other festivals such as the Chinese New Year provide children with opportunities to use chop sticks and to sample different foods. Good use is made of large blocks to build the Great Wall of China and of items such as torn paper to create Chinese symbols. Children also perform a dragon dance to the accompaniment of percussion instruments.
- * Children learn the practical significance of religion through daily acts of kindness and caring for others. Prayers are said each day before the consumption of snacks. At Christmas, children visit the local church and perform nativity plays.
- * During the inspection, children frequently displayed a sense of awe and wonder at what they saw and heard in their studies.
- * Regular opportunities are provided for children to use computer programmes, with many showing growing competence in the use of the mouse.

Shortcomings

- * Little evidence is available to show that children have appropriate opportunities for working with wood.

Physical Development

Children develop very good motor skills and co-ordination by the end of the school year. Maximum progress is made in this area.

Good Features

- * Manipulative skills are developing well and enable children to colour, paint and draw with confidence. Many can use scissors and cut without assistance, whilst others snip paper successfully when helped by adults.
- * Good hand-eye co-ordination is developed through activities such as threading beads, moulding salt dough, colouring, and pre-writing practice. Able children are acquiring appropriate pencil grip and show good control of a computer mouse to operate programmes.
- * Regular use is made of jigsaws and other puzzles to develop fine motor skills. Children

create imaginative objects during activity time and use large and small construction toys with increasing dexterity.

- * Good attention is paid to safety in using toys and equipment. Children are sensitive of the needs of animals and appreciate that small creatures need to be handled with care to avoid causing them fear or harm.
- * Most children are able to use a funnel to fill a container without too much spillage and to pour sand and water from one container to another.
- * All can pedal and steer large wheeled toys around the play area without colliding with each other. Most are able to aim a beanbag to hit a target or throw it through a hoop from a reasonable distance away.
- * Several children show good balance when travelling over low beams in the adventure playground. Many can step without assistance from one upright log to another.
- * Children use the indoor climbing frame with enthusiasm and confidence, and enjoy running, skipping and climbing outdoors. Very good standards are achieved in this area.

Shortcomings

- * No significant shortcomings were observed.

Creative Development

Good progress is made in the development of children's creative and aesthetic abilities. Standards of achievement in this area are good overall.

Good Features

- * Regular opportunities are provided for children to paint, draw and build, using a range of materials. Children experiment confidently with different media and show creativity and imagination in what they do and make. Good use, for example, has been made of boxes and other materials to build homes for pets.
- * Observation indicates that children are able to make choices for themselves. When creating models of animals such as rabbits, moles or birds, they select feathers, cloth and materials, and cut, stick, paste and paint with confidence.
- * Scissor work displays differing levels of ability, with good skills in some instances.
- * Children enjoy painting and show a sense of awe at the changes produced by the mixing of colours.
- * With help from an adult, most children are able to paint the shape of a hand and to use a stencil. Tasks are performed with interest and enjoyment.

- * Staff work hard to engender interest and excitement through exploring use of the senses. Children respond accordingly and work with purpose and enthusiasm.
- * Role play in the home corner and "vet's surgery" helps to extend learning experiences and foster creative abilities.
- * Much enjoyment is gained from music sessions. With support from staff, children are able to use sticks and body parts to keep time to a beat and sing a variety of songs in both English and Welsh. Many can turn on the tape-recorder and sing or play percussion instruments in the music corner.
- * Displays, photographs and samples of work indicate that children follow a suitable range of activities throughout the school year.

Shortcomings

- * Too little adult support is sometimes given to activities in the music corner to enable all pupils to gain maximum benefit from making and investigating music.
- * Children do not always receive sufficient benefit from recall or plenary sessions. A few wander away from the group and cause disruption to other activities. Much prompting is needed to initiate and sustain discussion.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress since the Last Inspection

Overall, good progress has been made in dealing with the key issues identified during the last inspection.

- * The last inspection report, published on 4th August, 1997, identified five key areas for action. The school was advised that, to build on existing strengths and to improve the quality of provision, it needed to:
 - i. have the benefit of the support of a governing body;
 - ii. update its information technology resources for the children;
 - iii. supplement its outdoor resources to further enhance the activities for physical development;
 - iv. enhance further the efficiency of its daily administration through the provision of an office computer;
 - v. maintain the good practice and high standards achieved in the six areas of learning and continue the outstanding contribution it makes in the preparation of

children for their transfer to infant school.

- * Progress since that time has been the following.

Key Issue 1

A management body has been set up under the chairmanship of an officer of the local education authority. The group meets on a regular basis and provides valuable support to the school.

Key Issue 2

Following the last report, the school drew up a plan to improve provision in information and communications technology. Computers have been obtained and a suitable range of programmes installed. Teaching staff have benefited from specialist training and, together with nurse nurses, make confident use of equipment. All children are given suitable computer experiences during their second and third terms in the school.

Key Issue 3

Since 1997, the outdoor area has been developed with the aid of the Prince's Trust, the local authority's arboreal department and a local environment group. Children now benefit from a rich, stimulating outdoor environment which promotes excitement and enjoyment in learning. Good provision has been made in terms of toys and equipment. Further improvements were being undertaken at the time of the inspection.

Key Issue 4

Good use is now made of computers for administrative purposes, particularly in areas such as the production of documents to guide teaching and learning, the exchange of e-mails, and communications with parents and the local education authority.

Key Issue 5

Much good and very good practice continues to be evident in all areas of learning. The headteacher and staff strive continually to raise standards of teaching and learning and to ensure that children receive a solid foundation for future progress and development.

8.2 Key Issues for Action

The school now needs to:

- * maintain and develop existing good practices;
- * concentrate on the further development of skills in literacy and number;
- * enhance existing strategies to improve attendance.

The inspection team would like to express their warm appreciation of the co-operation and assistance they received from the headteacher, staff, management committee, parents and pupils of the school throughout the inspection.

APPENDIX A

Basic Information about the School

Name of School	Caia Park Nursery School
School Type	Community
Age-Range of Pupils	3 – 4 years
Address of School	Prince Charles Road Queen's Park Wrexham
Post Code	LL13 8TH
Telephone Number	01978 356177

Headteacher	Mrs. Sheila Meadows
Date of Appointment	1st September, 1998
Registered Inspector	Mrs. Eirwen Griffiths
Dates of Inspection	7th – 9th April, 2003

APPENDIX B

School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of Pupils in Each Year Group</i>									
Year Group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of Pupils	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14

<i>Total Number of Teachers</i>			
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time Equivalent (fte)
Number of Teachers	0	2	1.3

<i>Staffing Information</i>	
Pupil : Adult Ratio	4.24 : 1
Teacher (fte) : Class Ratio	1.3 : 1

<i>Percentage Attendance for Three Complete Terms Prior to the Inspection</i>					
	N	R	KS1	KS2	Whole School
Term 1	80	-	-	-	80
Term 2	86	-	-	-	86
Term 3	88.5	-	-	-	88.5

Number of Pupils Excluded during Twelve Months prior to Inspection	0
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APPENDIX C

The Evidence Base of Inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors over a period of 2½ days.

- Pre-inspection meetings were held with the headteacher, staff and management committee.
- Seven parents attended a meeting with the registered inspector
- Nineteen questionnaires were returned, analysed and summarised.
- All documentation submitted by the school was analysed and discussed, including the school development plan, policy and curriculum documents and teachers' planning files.
- Children were observed as they arrived and departed from school and during breaks.
- At various times during the day, inspectors took the opportunity to talk to children and to discuss their work.
- Eighteen sessions or parts of sessions were observed.
- A wide range of work was examined throughout the school.
- Inspectors discussed children's work with teachers and examined assessment records.
- Discussions were also held with the headteacher and other staff.
- The work of children with special educational needs was examined.
- Minutes of meetings and documents relating to the management of the school were discussed.
- Budget figures were examined and discussed with the headteacher.
- Attendance and other records were inspected.

APPENDIX D

Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Team Member	Responsibilities for Areas of Learning	Aspect Responsibilities
Mrs. E. Griffiths	Language, Literacy and Communication Skills Knowledge and Understanding of the World Creative Development	The School and its Priorities Main Findings Standards of Achievement in Subjects and Areas of Learning Standards of Achievement in Key Skills across the Curriculum Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Behaviour and Attitudes Teaching Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement Leadership & Efficiency Progress since the Last Inspection Key Issues for Action
Mrs. V. Howells	Personal and Social Development Mathematical Development Physical Development	Main Findings Assessment, Recording and Reporting Curriculum Special Educational Needs Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources Key Issues for Action
Mr. Selwyn Roberts		Main Findings Attendance Support and Guidance Partnership with Parents, the Community, Schools and Other Institutions Partnership with Industry Key Issues for Action