

INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10 OF
SCHOOL INSPECTIONS ACT, 1996

ERDDIG NURSERY SCHOOL

Erddig Road
Wrexham, LL13 7DN

School Number: 570/1008

Date of Inspection: 10th – 12th December, 2003

MRS. EIRWEN GRIFFITHS

REGISTERED INSPECTOR: WO50/17562

27th January, 2004

UNDER ESTYN CONTRACT NUMBER: T/101/03P

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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

Erddig is a 56-place nursery school situated in a long-established housing area on the outskirts of Wrexham.

Currently, the school has a total roll of ninety-nine pupils aged three to four years, fifty-four of whom attend in the morning and forty-five in the afternoon. Included in this number are twelve children with special educational needs who have been admitted under the local education authority's "resourced-provision" arrangements.

The school describes a quarter of the area it serves as relatively prosperous, another quarter as economically disadvantaged, and the remainder as falling into neither category. The annual intake covers the full ability range, although a number of children have underdeveloped language skills on entry.

English is the main language spoken at home by the vast majority of pupils, with no child coming from a Welsh-speaking home. Approximately 4% of pupils come from ethnic-minority families, with home languages comprising Arabic, Turkish, Italian and Bislama.

The current aims and priorities of the school are the following:

- to provide a good-quality appropriate early-years education for all pupils in a stimulating learning environment which is secure, happy and caring;
- to ensure that each child flourishes and develops to his or her full potential;
- to provide a world full of awe and wonder with first-hand experiences that inspire exploration and discovery by the children;
- to ensure that all children learn and develop further skills through active "hands-on" play experiences;
- to establish successful partnerships with parents or carers and any other relevant persons or groups to enhance and benefit the pupils of the nursery.

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 Easter, 2002.

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

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The Main Findings of the Report

This is a school with a warm, secure, family atmosphere which satisfactorily promotes the desirable outcomes in learning for children under five years of age.

Educational Standards Achieved by Pupils

- * During the inspection, standards of educational achievement were satisfactory or better in approximately 93% of the sessions observed, including 33% where they were good. Standards were unsatisfactory in some 7% of sessions.
- * 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 | Satisfactory |
| Mathematical Development | Good |
| Knowledge and Understanding of the World | Satisfactory |
| Physical Development | Satisfactory |
| Creative Development | Good |

- * In general, children are making steady progress in applying key skills across the curriculum and attain satisfactory standards in speaking, listening, number and early literacy work. Standards are currently unsatisfactory in information and communications technology, mainly because too little use is made of computers.

Ethos of the School

- * Good provision overall is made for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Children are taught in a happy, caring environment where they are encouraged to share and be kind to one another.
- * Behaviour and attitudes are good in most cases.
- * Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory overall, although a significant minority of children regularly arrive after the commencement of lessons.

Quality of Education

- * During the inspection, the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in approximately 87% of the sessions observed, including 20% where it was good. Teaching was unsatisfactory in some 13% of sessions.

- * Teaching by the special-educational-needs co-ordinator is consistently good and is well suited to the particular needs of the children.
- * Satisfactory procedures overall have been adopted for assessing, recording and reporting on children's work and progress, although there are weaknesses in some areas.
- * Assessment for pupils with special educational needs is accurate and consistent, and well used to promote higher achievement. In other areas, however, too little use is generally made of assessment to assist teachers' planning and classroom organisation.
- * Policies and schemes of work form a sound basis for the delivery of the curriculum. Children, in the main, are provided with a variety of experiences designed to cater for their needs, although there is scope for broadening the range of activities and offering greater individual choice.
- * Good provision overall is made for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils. Children readily turn to adults whenever help or guidance is required.
- * Health and safety documentation is clear and well maintained. Less attention, however, is paid to risk assessment and regular inspection of the premises to identify and eliminate potential safety hazards.
- * Overall, good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. "Resourced" children generally receive good support to enable them to progress towards the desirable outcomes for learning. On occasions, however, strategies for helping children with more challenging difficulties are not always appropriate to prevent them from hindering the learning of others.
- * Good links have 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. A satisfactory partnership has also been developed with industry.

Management

- * Leadership and efficiency are satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides caring, supportive leadership and has established a pleasant family atmosphere and safe learning environment for children. She also serves as a good role model for teaching. Good relationships have been established with staff, parents and pupils.
- * Sound emphasis has been placed on ensuring that long-term planning provides appropriate guidance for teachers. Less attention, however, is devoted to short-term planning and the development of appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding in

each of the six areas of learning. Sufficient guidance has not yet been provided in this area.

- * Routines are generally well established, although some aspects of classroom organisation and teaching practice require more effective monitoring to ensure that children have maximum opportunities for the development of skills. No formal strategies are currently in place for securing consistency in standards of teaching and learning throughout the school.
- * Procedures for self-evaluation and planning for improvement require further strengthening to achieve satisfactory standards and outcomes.
- * Although the school development plan sets out targets, costs and time-scales, strategies for effecting improvements and measuring success are insufficiently defined.
- * Whilst each member of staff is given responsibilities for a specific area of the curriculum, co-ordinators are not yet sufficiently involved in analysing strengths and weaknesses in their areas.
- * Useful support is provided by a managing body comprising an officer from the local education authority and representatives from various schools in the area.
- * Day-to-day administration is smooth and efficient.
- * Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall and generally well used by the school.

Progress since the Last Inspection

- * Overall, satisfactory progress has been made in dealing with two of the three key issues identified during the last inspection. The third key issue — increasing the levels of staff intervention and support in free-play periods, particularly during imaginative and physical activities — still requires further attention.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards Achieved in Areas of Learning

During the inspection, standards of educational achievement were satisfactory or better in approximately 93% of the sessions seen, including 33% where they were good. Standards were less than satisfactory in some 7% of sessions.

- * Children make satisfactory to good progress during their time in the school, particularly those with special educational needs.
- * Standards of educational achievement are currently satisfactory overall in language, literacy and communication skills, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical development.
- * Good standards are achieved in mathematical and creative development.

3.2 Standards Achieved in Key Skills across the Curriculum

With the exception of information and communications technology, standards in key skills across the curriculum are satisfactory overall.

- * Children listen carefully to stories, rhymes and poems and show clear understanding and enjoyment of what they hear.
- * Most respond satisfactorily to commands and instructions, although many are slow in responding to requests to tidy up after their work.
- * Listening stations are not used sufficiently to promote concentration.
- * Numerous opportunities are provided for discussion during the course of the session. Speaking skills, on the whole, are applied satisfactorily in all areas of learning, although a number of children experience difficulties in expressing themselves clearly. Groups are sometimes too small to encourage appropriate interaction.
- * Role play does not benefit from sufficient adult intervention.
- * Children enjoy books and are beginning to recognise that print conveys meaning.
- * A variety of mark-making activities help to develop hand-eye co-ordination and confidence in manipulating implements. Insufficient prominence, however, is given to writing during role-play situations.
- * Key skills in mathematics are successfully promoted throughout the school week. At the beginning of the day, children count in English and Welsh when assisting their teachers to mark the register. When playing games, they look for numbers to match to a set number of objects. In the home corner, they cut out cakes into squares and circles. Large-circle times provide opportunities for practising counting through rhymes and songs. Children also sort, thread and make patterns, and count people and objects in the stories which are read to them.
- * Skills in information and communication technology are underdeveloped. Insufficient use is made of computers to support and extend children's learning.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Overall, good provision is made for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

- * During the inspection, children listened carefully to and enjoyed stories about the birth of Jesus. Effective use was made of discussion to help them to recognise characters and to place events in sequence.
- * Whole-school assemblies and prayers before snack times help to develop a sense of spiritual awareness.
- * Children are taught in a happy, caring environment where they are encouraged to share and be kind to one another.
- * Visitors from services such as the police and fire brigade help children to understand the community in which they live.
- * Daily use of the Welsh language and celebrations such as St. David's Day help to build up knowledge and understanding of the heritage and culture of Wales. All pupils, for example, respond in Welsh when the register is taken.
- * Evidence indicates that children are introduced to other customs and cultures. Pictures around the building, for example, illustrate events such as the Chinese New Year. Children have also discussed and drawn Divali candles.
- * Whilst children gain in confidence from a wide range of experiences, sufficient emphasis is not always placed on developing independence and an interest in investigation.

4.2 Behaviour and Attitudes

Behaviour and attitudes are good in most cases.

- * The school has drawn up a suitable policy to encourage good behaviour, including guidance on dealing with children with particular problems.
- * Children respond well to adults and are friendly to each other. Most work and play amicably together.

- * Staff deal calmly and effectively with any incidents of inappropriate conduct.
- * On occasions, children become unnecessarily excitable as, for example, during clearing-up times.
- * A minority of children find it difficult to listen and to respond to routines.

4.3 Attendance

Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory overall, although a significant minority of children regularly arrive after the commencement of lessons.

- * The average rate of attendance has now almost reached 90%, which is an improvement since the last inspection.
- * Although attendance is not compulsory for children under five years of age, the school nevertheless impresses upon parents the advantages of regular nursery education and encourages them to ensure that their children gain maximum benefit from the provision.
- * Registers are promptly completed at the start of each session and retained in the classroom during the day. The headteacher's attention is drawn to any point of concern.
- * The method of recording attendance complies with statutory requirements.
- * Class records are regularly collated and used to analyse trends.
- * Not all children arrive punctually for the start of sessions. Most parents offer the school their full co-operation but many give priority to first taking older children to primary schools in the area, thus contributing to the overall level of lateness.
- * Other children arrive late because of the unreliability of the pre-arranged taxi service. The headteacher has expressed concern about this matter and raised it with the transport company in an effort to improve the situation.
- * Good support is received from the education support worker.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Teaching

During the inspection, the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in approximately 87% of the lessons observed, including 20% where it was good. Teaching was unsatisfactory in some 13% of lessons.

- * All members of staff display a strong caring attitude towards the children and ensure that they are taught in a safe, secure environment.
- * A consistent approach is adopted to the management of pupils.
- * Activities, in most cases, are suitably matched to children's different stages of development.
- * Long and medium-term planning is satisfactory overall. Termly themes are suited to the age and understanding of the children.
- * Good efforts are made to promote children's self-esteem and confidence by regular praise and encouragement.
- * Teaching by the special-educational-needs co-ordinator is consistently good and is well suited to the particular needs of the children.
- * Appropriate language is used to explain group tasks to children and to help develop their linguistic skills. A very good contribution is made by the two nursery nurses.
- * Groups are sometimes too small to make maximum use of staff time and to provide suitable opportunities for peer discussion.
- * The school recognises that insufficient emphasis is currently placed on daily planning and that learning objectives are not always clearly defined for each session. Too little thought is given to providing children with a wide choice of stimulating experiences and ensuring that plenary sessions are properly planned to allow sufficient time for discussion.
- * Insufficient attention is given to information technology. Computers were not switched on during the inspection. Evidence indicates that work is underdeveloped in this area.

5.2 Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Overall, satisfactory procedures have been adopted for assessing, recording and reporting on children's work and progress, although there are weaknesses in some areas.

- * A detailed profile is drawn up of children's prior attainments upon entry to the school. The information is then transferred to the local education authority's baseline books, *Travelling Together*, to form the basis for a whole-school tracking system. Appropriate attention is given to ensuring that the books are kept up to date.
- * The school sets termly objectives in each of the six areas of learning. Checklists are used to assess the progress of individual children, but records are not always kept in a manner which ensures that full information is readily available and purposefully used by teachers.
- * Assessment for pupils with special educational needs is accurate and consistent, and well used to promote higher achievement. In other areas, however, too little use is generally made of assessment to assist teachers' planning and classroom organisation.
- * Plenary sessions take place at the end of lessons but do not generally provide focused opportunities for children to assess their own learning. Large-circle times lack appropriate use of questioning techniques to enable children to think and compose replies that will fully develop expressive-language skills.
- * Profiles are kept of children's work, with dated but unannotated samples. Current profiles contain too few samples to ensure that progress can be properly determined.
- * Three meetings are held a year to enable parents to discuss their children's progress with teachers. Parents are also encouraged to visit the school whenever there is a matter they wish to discuss.
- * Apart from cases of special educational need, the school does not provide written reports for parents — a fact to which some parents have referred in their comments.

5.3 Curriculum

Overall, pupils receive a satisfactory curriculum based on the *Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning*.

- * Policies and schemes of work form a sound basis for the delivery of the curriculum.
- * Children, in the main, are provided with a variety of experiences designed to cater for their needs, although there is scope for broadening the range of activities and offering greater individual choice.
- * Visits to places of interest promote children's confidence and enhance their knowledge and understanding.
- * Long and medium-term planning is not transformed into effective daily lesson plans in which learning outcomes and group work are clearly identified.

- * Good arrangements are made for personal and social education, although no written policy has yet been drawn up for this area. Due attention is paid to social relationships and the development of self-esteem and awareness.
- * Daily experiences in information and communication technology are not an integral part of the curriculum. Insufficient emphasis is currently placed on this important aspect of learning.

5.4 Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare

Good provision overall is made for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils.

- * The headteacher and staff have established a safe, friendly environment for children.
- * Good pastoral care and support are provided in all cases.
- * Children readily turn to adults whenever help or guidance is required.
- * Staff conscientiously carry out their duties and ensure that children are appropriately supervised at all times.
- * All children are fully included in all aspects of the life and work of the school.
- * Effective arrangements are in place to deal with child-protection issues. All members of staff are aware of their responsibilities and have undertaken appropriate training in this area.
- * Health and safety documentation is clear and well maintained. Less attention, however, is paid to risk assessment and regular inspection of the premises to identify and eliminate potential safety hazards.

5.5 Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

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

- * Currently, twelve children whose specific needs have been identified before entry to the school attend the nursery as part of the local authority's "resourced provision" for the area.
- * All children receiving "resourced provision" are assessed against a county baseline. Admission is based on specialist advice.

- * Individual educational plans provide fine targets related to the specific needs of pupils. Parents are invited to contribute. Plans are reviewed each half-term and modified in the light of the progress made by pupils.
- * The school works very closely with outside agencies to provide fully-integrated support for children. Valuable assistance is received from the language-support service, the educational psychologist and the physiotherapist.
- * Two trainee therapists from the Applied Behavioural Analysis Team provide caring support for a child on the autistic spectrum. This support was introduced in October, 2003, and was very much in its infancy at the time of the inspection. Good liaison takes place between the nursery and the nearby infants' school to cater effectively for the child concerned.
- * Home-school diaries provide good opportunities for the specialist teacher and parents to maintain a continual dialogue and to keep each other informed of progress and difficulties.
- * Good relationships exist between parents and the specialist teacher/inclusion co-ordinator.
- * "Resourced" children generally receive good support to enable them to progress towards the desirable outcomes for learning. On occasions, however, strategies for helping children with more challenging difficulties are not always appropriate to prevent them from hindering the learning of others.
- * Ongoing assessment of pupils receiving "resourced provision" is good and enables children to be appropriately placed when they reach five years of age. Detailed records are kept for this purpose. About half of the children subsequently attend a mainstream school.
- * All "resourced" children make good progress commensurate with their abilities.
- * Twelve further children have also been identified as having a special educational need and are being monitored in accordance with the recommendations of the revised national Code of Practice.
- * Teachers and nursery nurses in the mainstream have been trained to work with children with special educational needs and keep detailed records in their daybooks so that they can identify pupils who experience difficulties in learning.
- * Children in the mainstream with delayed language and speech receive good additional support from the specialist teacher and make good progress during their time in the school.

- * Other children benefit from a behaviour support programme.
- * Makaton sign language is used in a small way to enhance communication skills at the beginning of each day, but was not seen in use at other times during the inspection. Children's communication skills develop slowly.
- * Parents attend meetings with the specialist teacher to discuss individual education plans and the progress made by their children.

5.6 Partnership with Parents and Community, Schools and Other Institutions

Good links have 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.
- * Weekly newsletters keep parents well informed about events and activities.
- * A "parent manager" organises fund-raising events, which are well supported by parents and provide valuable financial assistance to the school.
- * During the inspection, parents provided enthusiastic help in wrapping Christmas presents, preparing snacks, washing up, reading stories and playing games with children.
- * Parents are invited to the school for harvest concerts and Mother's Day celebrations when tea and biscuits are provided.
- * The local vicar visits the school and reads stories to the children. Frequent use is made of the church hall for children to entertain parents and local people.
- * Visits to the Tŷ Mawr Country Park provide opportunities for children to learn about animals and the environment.
- * Representatives of the fire brigade, ambulance service and police force visit the school to talk to children and to give practical demonstrations of their skills.
- * Good links have been established with local playgroups. Procedures are clearly outlined in the school's parental partnership policy.
- * Close liaison with other schools ensures a smooth transition to primary education. Teachers from nearby infants' schools visit the nursery to meet the children, play games and tell stories.

- * The special-educational-needs co-ordinator visits children's homes and new schools to discuss transfer arrangements.

5.7 Partnership with Industry

Satisfactory links have been established with industry.

- * The school does not yet have a written policy on developing a partnership with industry but has introduced a number of practical initiatives to increase knowledge of the world of work.
- * Visits to places such as a local supermarket and farm help to raise children's awareness of the work undertaken in the community.
- * People from different occupations have visited the school to talk about their work and experiences.
- * Good financial and other support has been received from a large chemical company.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of Self-Evaluation and Planning for Improvement

Procedures for self-evaluation and planning for improvement require further strengthening to achieve satisfactory standards and outcomes.

- * The school has adopted the local education authority's model for self-evaluation, although it is not always successfully applied.
- * An appropriate assessment is made of children's strengths and weaknesses on entry to the school.
- * All members of staff are involved in the composition of the school development plan. Although the document sets out targets, costs and time-scales, strategies for effecting improvements and measuring success are insufficiently defined.
- * Staff attend courses where they meet colleagues in early-years' education, although no visits have yet been made to other schools to observe different practices and to review and update individual expertise.

- * Whilst each member of staff is given responsibilities for a specific area of the curriculum, co-ordinators are not yet sufficiently involved in analysing strengths and weaknesses in their areas. No definite strategies are yet in place for monitoring standards of teaching and learning.

6.2 Leadership and Efficiency

Leadership and efficiency are satisfactory overall.

- * The headteacher provides caring, supportive leadership and has established a pleasant family atmosphere and safe learning environment for children. She also serves as a good role model for teaching.
- * Good relationships have been established with staff, parents and pupils.
- * Sound emphasis has been placed on ensuring that long-term planning provides appropriate guidance for teachers. Less attention, however, is devoted to short-term planning and the development of appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding in each of the six areas of learning. Sufficient guidance has not yet been provided in this area.
- * Routines are generally well established, although some aspects of classroom organisation and teaching practice require more effective monitoring to ensure that children have maximum opportunities for the development of skills. No formal strategies are currently in place for securing consistency in standards of teaching and learning throughout the school.
- * All members of staff attend external courses and share information.
- * The local education authority provides helpful advice, manages the budget and deals with the maintenance of the premises.
- * Useful support is provided by a managing body comprising an officer from the local education authority and representatives from various schools in the area.
- * Day-to-day administration is smooth and efficient.

6.3 Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall and generally well used by the school.

- * The school is adequately staffed for the present number of pupils on roll.
- * Suitable arrangements are in place for the induction of newly-appointed members.
- * Good support is received from ancillary staff including the cleaners, who keep the interior of the premises spotlessly clean.
- * Accommodation is satisfactory and, in the main, appropriately used to meet children's needs.
- * The headteacher and staff have created a bright, stimulating environment for learning. The entrance foyer displays a range of creative work and engenders a warm, welcoming ambience to the school.
- * Sections of the external wooden framework of the building are in disrepair and require attention.
- * The outdoor play area is small and has an uneven surface which restricts children's movements.
- * Learning resources are adequate in most areas, with a good range of books, games and role-play equipment.
- * Outdoor equipment includes a number of well-maintained large wheeled toys.

7. AREAS OF LEARNING

Standards Achieved by Pupils

Language, Literacy and Communication Skills

Overall, satisfactory progress is made in the development of language, literacy and communication skills.

Good Features

- * The majority of children listen carefully to stories during group and whole-class sessions and generally become thoroughly involved with events and characters. Concentration is normally good on such occasions.

- * Sound emphasis is placed on developing an interest in books. Children choose their favourite stories, recognise characters, turn pages correctly, and follow print when reading with an adult.
- * Children have a wide repertoire of nursery rhymes and action songs, which they sing confidently and enthusiastically both with staff and visitors.
- * Circle times provide satisfactory opportunities for children to listen and speak to their peers.
- * During the inspection, children made good attempts to speak to each other in role play about the Christmas story.
- * When working together in small groups, children are encouraged to speak and respond to an adult, particularly during creative activities. Nursery nurses make a very good contribution to language development in such sessions.
- * Suitable experiences are provided each day for children to improve hand control through colouring, painting and drawing. Most children can manipulate crayons, pencils and paint brushes successfully. A small number can write their own names.
- * Staff display particular patience and sensitivity towards children with unclear speech. Ample time is afforded to enable them to repeat phrases and express themselves fully.

Shortcomings

- * The role play area in one room is cluttered, insufficiently equipped and generally inadequate for developing speech. Activities are not sufficiently structured to ensure that children make maximum progress.
- * Insufficient use is made of listening stations to aid concentration and promote enjoyment of rhymes, stories and songs.
- * Little emphasis is placed on mark-making in role-play activities. Too few opportunities are provided for children to make use of telephone pads, letters, lists and receipts.
- * No use was made of information technology during the inspection to support learning in this area.
- * Children do not benefit sufficiently from plenary sessions. Inadequate time is given for discussion and the recall of work.
- * The practice of allowing children to sit in outdoor clothes in readiness for going home at the end of sessions does not promote effective concentration and learning.

Personal and Social Development

Steady progress is made in personal and social development. Standards of achievement are satisfactory overall.

Good Features

- * Children develop positive relationships with adults in the classroom and learn to play harmoniously with each other.
- * Most concentrate well when listening to stories and singing songs and number rhymes.
- * The majority readily share toys and equipment, respect each other's choices, and show a growing understanding of right and wrong.
- * Visits to places of interest help to develop personal knowledge and foster social relationships.
- * Children are developing a sound knowledge of the wider world and different customs and cultures. During the inspection, for example, some interesting work took place on Divali and Norwegian Christmas customs.

Shortcomings

- * Children are not given sufficient opportunities to take on responsibilities such as looking after each other and helping out in the classroom. A significant number fail to tidy up after themselves.
- * Social interaction during snack time is underdeveloped.
- * Children sometimes engage in solitary play when group activities would provide greater incentive for learning. Groups are often unequal in size.
- * Locks on classroom doors prevent children from gaining independence by going to the toilet on their own.
- * Children are not sufficiently encouraged to develop responsibility for their own learning by choosing from a suitable variety of tasks.

Mathematical Development

Overall, children make good progress in mathematical development and are working towards the desirable outcomes for learning. Standards of achievement are also good and commensurate with children's abilities.

Good Features

- * Children enjoy meaningful sand and water play and are learning early mathematical language. Those with a language delay receive good assistance from the specialist language teacher.
- * Good use is made of everyday activities to help to develop counting skills. Able children are able to order numbers up to ten.
- * All children are beginning to develop an understanding of addition and subtraction through singing number rhymes.
- * Children learn to count and match objects by colour and size with help from an adult. Regular use of puzzles also helps children to match by colour and shape.
- * Most children name colours accurately.
- * The more able can name shapes such a circle, rectangle and square.

Shortcomings

- * Although many children are working hard to overcome early speech problems, mathematical talk skills are currently underdeveloped.
- * Too little use is made of information and communications technology to consolidate learning.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Satisfactory progress is being made in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world.

Good Features

- * Appropriate use is made of visits and talks by local people to enhance children's knowledge of the world in which they live. Satisfactory awareness, for example, is shown of the work of the fireman, farmer and doctor and how their activities affect people's lives.
- * Most children can briefly talk about their pets and families. Topic work during the inspection ensured that pupils could identify and discuss events related to the Nativity.

- * Daily conversation takes place about the weather and the different days of the week. Older children are beginning to place events in order.
- * Children learn how to care for the environment and undertake practical activities such as the planting of bulbs. Regular use is made of magnifying glasses to observe objects in nature.
- * Most children can recognise the different materials used for the making of toys. Topic work on the subject helps to build up knowledge of differences between the present and past.
- * In technology, children show dexterity in laying out tracks and running vehicles upon them. "Floor mats" also help children to follow a route and recognise buildings.
- * Cooking forms a regular feature of the programme, with children showing keen interest in the subject and developing their sense of taste through the sampling of ingredients.
- * Work shows evidence of a multi-cultural dimension, with children learning about festivals such as Divali and the Chinese New Year.

Shortcomings

- * Insufficient emphasis is placed on purposeful play in one home corner currently devoted to the Three Bears. Opportunities are lost to develop skills in a number of areas.
- * A very limited introduction is given to working with a computer. Children do not have sufficient opportunities to develop early information-technology skills. Present standards in this area are unsatisfactory.
- * No facilities are currently provided for working with wood.
- * Too few science interest areas are provided to enable children to develop investigative skills for themselves.

Physical Development

Physical development is satisfactory overall.

Good Features

- * Children move carefully around the classroom and are developing good manipulative skills to colour, draw, paint and stick. Most can use scissors without assistance. The more able have correct pencil grip.
- * All children are developing steady hand-eye co-ordination through threading beads, moulding salt dough, colouring and early writing practice.
- * Many create imaginative objects, using construction toys such as *Duplo Lego* with increasing dexterity. All show good fine motor skills in tackling jigsaws and other puzzles and fitting pieces together.
- * Much enjoyment is gained through playing with water. Most children can use a funnel and fill a container without too much spillage, and pour sand and water from one container to another or through simple moving toys.
- * All can pedal and steer large wheeled toys around the play yard without collisions.

Shortcomings

- * Outdoor time presently lacks structure and purpose, with children mainly pedalling large toys or running around. The range of activities is relatively limited and lacks sufficient variety, stimulation and adult input. Planning lacks clear direction to ensure that children receive a balanced range of exciting experiences that fully promote the development of gross motor skills.

Creative Development

Standards in creative development are good overall.

Good Features

- * Children explore and experiment with a variety of media, often producing good colourful work.
- * Work on display or retained in folders indicates that children benefit from a variety of techniques, including printing and colour mixing.
- * Pictures of families and friends show that shape and form are developing well in most cases.
- * Daily opportunities are provided for colouring, sticking and pasting. Children enjoy choosing fabrics and other materials to embellish their pictures. Satisfactory progress is made in scissor skills.

- * Manipulative skills are put to good use in moulding and rolling play dough and producing shapes to print various objects.
- * In music, children know and can sing a wide range of songs and rhymes. Many display a growing sense of rhythm and are beginning to differentiate between loud and soft sounds. Some can recognise the names of percussion instruments.
- * When using construction materials, children display appropriate creativity and imagination.

Shortcomings

- * In one class, materials are not always sufficiently well prepared or available to ensure the full development of abilities.
- * Group sizes are sometimes too small to facilitate suitable interaction and discussion.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress since the Last Inspection

Overall, satisfactory progress has been made in dealing with two of the three key issues identified during the last inspection.

- * The last inspection was conducted by two of Her Majesty's inspectors of schools during November, 1997. A report published in 1998 identified three key areas for action. The school was advised that, in order to build on its many strengths and further enhance the quality of provision, it needed to:
 - i. strengthen the planning of provision for aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world so as to improve progression in children's learning;
 - ii. arrange an inviting reading corner to encourage spontaneous handling and enjoyment of books individually by the children;
 - iii. increase the levels of staff intervention and support in free-play periods, particularly during imaginative and physical activities.
- * Progress since that time has been the following.

Key Issue 1

Children now generally have a suitable range of experiences to help them acquire appropriate knowledge and understanding of the world, although work in this and other areas of learning does not yet benefit from regular use of computers.

Key Issue 2

Strong emphasis is now laid on introducing children to books and developing a love of literature. Each class area currently has a library corner with a suitable range of colourful books. Children willingly spend time in the area and enjoy choosing and following stories.

Key Issue 3

The level of staff support and intervention during free-play periods still remains an area for further development.

8.1 Key Issues for Action

The school needs to:

- * increase the levels of staff intervention and support in free-play periods, particularly during imaginative and physical activities, as recommended during the last inspection;
- * establish a rigorous, structured system for directly monitoring standards of teaching and learning;
- * improve short-term planning to ensure that there are clear learning objectives and that each child is given a balanced range of experiences;
- * review current classroom organisation and practice to enable children to make maximum progress in all areas of learning;
- * take early steps to increase opportunities for children to make regular use of information technology to reinforce and extend their learning;
- * address the other shortcomings set out in the report.

The school has already identified some of the issues as areas for further improvement.

The inspection team would like to express their 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 | Erddig Nursery School |
| School Type | Community |
| Age-Range of Pupils | 3 – 4 years |
| Address of School | Erddig Road Wrexham |
| Post Code | LL13 7DN |
| Telephone Number | 01978 356140 |

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Headteacher | Mrs. Margaret H. Hasson |
| Date of Appointment | Easter, 2002 |
| Registered Inspector | Mrs. Eirwen Griffiths |
| Dates of Inspection | 10th – 12th December, 2003 |

APPENDIX B

School Data and Indicators

Number of Pupils in Each Year Group

| Year Group | N (fte) | R | Y1 | Y2 | Y3 | Y4 | Y5 | Y6 | Total |
|------------------|---------|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|-------|
| Number of Pupils | 49.5 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 49.5 |

Total Number of Teachers

| | Full-Time | Part-Time | Full-Time Equivalent (fte) |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Number of Teachers | 3 | 1 | 3.4 |

Staffing Information

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Pupil : Adult Ratio | 7.07 : 1 |
| Teacher (fte) : Class Ratio | 17 : 1 |

Percentage Attendance for Three Complete Terms Prior to the Inspection

| | N | R | KS1 | KS2 | Whole School |
|--------|----|---|-----|-----|--------------|
| Term 1 | 84 | - | - | - | 84 |
| Term 2 | 85 | - | - | - | 85 |
| Term 3 | 88 | - | - | - | 88 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Number of Pupils Excluded during Twelve Months prior to Inspection | 0 |
|--|---|

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.
- Five parents attended a meeting with the registered inspector
- Fifty-two 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.
- Twenty-two 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.
- 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 Support and Guidance Special Educational Needs Key Issues for Action |
| Mr. S. Roberts | | Main Findings Attendance Partnership with Parents, the Community, Schools and Other Institutions Partnership with Industry Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources Key Issues for Action |