

# Lea Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	109763
<b>Local authority</b>	Slough
<b>Inspection number</b>	377982
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Rob Crompton

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	120
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Wal Chahal
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kusum Trikha
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 February 2009
<b>School address</b>	Wexham Road Slough SL2 5JW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01753 536492
<b>Fax number</b>	01753 821798
<b>Email address</b>	head@lea-nursery.slough.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	3–4
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	25–26 January 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	377862



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Rob Crompton

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice by a single inspector. The inspector visited 18 lessons or part-lessons and observed four teachers, four nursery nurses and eight teaching assistants. The inspector held meetings with members of the governing body and staff, and talked with children. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and observed the school's work. He looked at the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies, and assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and children's work. The inspector examined questionnaires from 84 parents and carers, and 17 members of staff.

## Information about the school

Children are admitted at the beginning of each term and most have three or five terms in the Nursery. Around 60 children attend the morning or afternoon sessions. They come from a wide range of backgrounds, with the largest group being those of Pakistani heritage. The proportion of children with English as an additional language is very high (95%). Urdu and Punjabi are the most common home languages. Around 40% of children are at an early stage of learning English, which is much higher than usual. A broadly average proportion of children have disabilities or special educational needs, relating mainly to speech, language and communication. There are five 'key worker' groups in both the morning and afternoon. The school has Healthy School status and the Basic Skills award. The school shares a campus with a Muslim faith school and a community primary school. The building is shared with a Sure Start children's centre and a privately managed day nursery, both of which are subject to a separate inspection.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>1</b>

## Key findings

- Lea Nursery provides an outstanding quality of education. Children make excellent progress across all areas of learning as a result of lively and dynamic teaching within a highly stimulating learning environment. They thoroughly enjoy school and are very well prepared for the next steps in their education. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers say their children are happy, safe and well cared for.
- Careful tracking of each child’s progress is used to plan adult-led sessions and free-flow activities which build on children’s prior learning. The teaching is underpinned by an extremely secure understanding of how young children learn. Adults are highly skilled in engaging children, sustaining their attention and encouraging a strong sense of enquiry. A buzz of excitement both indoors and outdoors permeates each session. A strong focus on social and emotional development, together with the systematic teaching of early literacy and numeracy skills, means children reach or exceed the expected levels in these areas by the time they move on to Reception.
- Warm relationships between children and adults contribute to the harmonious atmosphere and strong sense of purpose across the Nursery. A consistent approach to behaviour management and the effective use of additional adults means all children thrive in a safe, nurturing environment.
- The headteacher plays a pivotal role in the school’s continuing success. There is a highly inclusive ethos in which every member of staff shares a common determination to ensure all children do as well as they can. The high priority given to promoting pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes significantly to their overall personal development.
- Thorough self-evaluation enables leaders and members of the governing body to identify quickly where improvements can be made. This process has resulted in joint planning with the Sure Start Children’s Centre to enhance support for families, particularly those newly arrived in the country.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further enhance the support provided for families, especially those whose circumstances might make them vulnerable, by:
  - capitalising on the school's strong partnership with parents and carers, and the existing links with the Sure Start Children's Centre, to enable parents and carers to take every advantage of the expertise and facilities available at both the school and the centre
  - maximising the use of the existing school premises, and the planned additional space, in order to increase opportunities for parents and carers to build relationships with the school and provide mutual support for one another.
  
- Raise the awareness of parents and carers who are newly arrived in the United Kingdom of how the school provides early learning experience for their children and how they might play a part in their children's learning and development.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

As they start school, children's social and communication skills are well below those expected of their age group. Many have difficulty parting from their parent or carer in their first few days in the Nursery and many are entering an English speaking environment for the first time. Due to highly skilled teaching, underpinned by an exceptionally engaging curriculum, children build extremely well on these low starting points. Indeed, levels of attainment by the end of Nursery are generally above those expected. Parents and carers are very positive about the quality of teaching and the progress their children are making.

Children's confidence in relating to one another and adults grows rapidly during their first term. During the inspection, children who had only recently started were very settled. They had adapted extremely well to the daily routines and were playing alongside one another happily. These positive attitudes to learning contribute to the excellent start they make in speaking and listening. Children are increasingly confident in offering ideas during group sessions and they quickly learn how to focus their attention when listening to their classmates and teachers. Through activities such as making sounds with their bodies and with percussion instruments, they learn to discriminate between different sounds and this provides a very good base for their subsequent learning about the relationship between sounds and letters. As they leave the Nursery most children can identify the initial sounds of words. 'My name starts with m' said one. Another exclaimed, 'Bear and butterfly both start with b!' Children become rapidly aware that writing conveys meaning and they respond well to opportunities to 'write', for example a 'recipe' or 'menu' in the role-play area. Their marks become increasingly recognisable as letters as they move through the nursery, with some writing three-letter words such as nip and sat.

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Children at a very early stage of acquiring English make equally good progress. Adults communicate in English as a matter of course but, as almost all are bilingual, they are able to explain things in the children's home language when appropriate. This contributes significantly, not only to children's English language development but to their progress across all areas of learning. Children with specific communication difficulties, such as difficulties in shaping their mouths and tongues to articulate sounds, benefit from skilled support from staff and visiting speech therapists. As a result, most speak far more clearly by the time they leave the Nursery.

Activities observed during the inspection, such as 'helping' an adult count, sorting small toys, constructing with large blocks and identifying shapes, indicated that children were making very good progress in developing early numeracy skills. The school's tracking records show that most reach or exceed the levels expected. Similarly, the school assessments show that children do well in learning about the world outside their immediate experience and make good headway in their creative and physical development.

### **Quality of teaching**

Children's outstanding achievement is, for the most part, due to the highly skilled and effective teaching. All adults are extremely adept at making relationships with children. They work together as a highly effective team, creating a very stimulating environment for children's learning and development. Children respond with great interest and thoroughly enjoy the wealth of stimulating activities that are integral to the curriculum. Adults take careful note of significant points in each child's learning, meeting regularly with colleagues to identify next steps and to modify their daily planning.

The key worker groups of around 12 children work extremely well in providing children with a special adult who gets to know them intimately, looks after their welfare and gains a deep understanding of their individual needs. During one key worker story session, which was typical of all those observed, the teacher's dynamic approach engaged all the children. They were eager to join in the repetitive phase, 'We can't go over it, we can't go under it...' and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

When children are pursuing activities independently, there is always someone on hand who can move their learning forward because all adults ensure they know all the children. Conversations between adults and children overheard during the inspection included, 'How will you make it stand up?...Can you make it fit?...'and 'Look, I've made 2 scoops!' Children are often drawn together in small groups to work with adults according to their emerging needs. For example, four children with communication difficulties were working with two adults on speech and language activities. At first very reticent, they were drawn into 'dressing the teddy' gradually naming the clothes due to the adults' sensitive encouragement.

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The teaching has a very positive impact on children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, six children who were finding it difficult to make relationships were gathered together in a PALS (playing and learning to socialise) group. This provided an excellent opportunity for them to learn to socialise. Fascinated by a 'magic' ball which glittered as it spun, they waited their turn to comment. Prompted by the adults' skilful questioning, they went on to express some understanding of empathy and how they might show they care for their classmates. In the meantime, a group of more-able children rose to the additional challenge during a well-planned story session, offering ideas about how the characters in a story were feeling and making predictions. Many activities successfully generate a sense of wonder. For example, children were fascinated as they played with blocks of frozen coloured water that were embedded with small toys and glitter; they delighted in using large paint rollers to produce new colours, and were thrilled as they listened intently to the sound of a 'rain stick'.

**Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Children have very positive attitudes and soon learn to relate well to one another. There is no sense of harassment; on the contrary, children are generally very kind and mutually supportive. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect between adults and children due to the adults' excellent role modelling and encouragement. The behaviour policy and its implementation are kept under regular review. Any significant incidents are recorded. The behaviour log shows that complaints by parents are few and far between, are followed up immediately and resolved quickly. Parents and carers are very positive about children's behaviour and the way the school ensures their children are safe. Typical of their comments were, 'My child is safe and well looked after. Staff are very helpful and friendly.'

At a level appropriate to their age, children learn the importance of keeping themselves and others safe. For example, they take care with resources such as paints, and assess risks for themselves when using the climbing apparatus such as only climbing to the height they are confident about. Children are eager to attend and most absence is due to early childhood ailments. They gain a good idea of the need to be punctual and show this as they move to different groups and from one activity to another. Regular staff training and reviews of the behaviour policy ensure all adults adopt the same approach, with an emphasis on positive reinforcement. Age-appropriate sanctions are used when necessary. Safeguarding procedures are well established and highly effective. A governor with considerable expertise in health and safety visits the school regularly to carry out audits. Risk assessments for off-site visits are extremely thorough.

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## Leadership and management

High expectations are embedded throughout the school. There is a mutual vision and common drive for improvement across all staff and this is shared by members of the well-informed and pro-active governing body. The monitoring of teaching and its impact on children's development and learning is exemplary. Through lesson observations, looking at children's records of achievement, tracking progress and analysing the views of parents, effective teaching methods are identified. Good practice is shared, emerging issues are addressed immediately, and further training is provided. The school's approach to management is held in high regard by the local authority and many aspects of its work are used as exemplars. An unswerving commitment to equal opportunities is at the centre of its ethos. The governing body works closely with other leaders to ensure that safeguarding procedures are of excellent quality.

The school's outstanding effectiveness has been sustained for a considerable time, but there is no complacency and the school has an excellent capacity for continuing success and sustained improvement. Rigorous self-evaluation means that development planning takes account of changing circumstances and excellent professional development opportunities are provided for staff as needed. In addition the school has identified the potential benefits in further developing links with the Sure Start Children's Centre, and is considering how to help parents newly arrived in the country gain an understanding of the curriculum and how they can support their children.

The curriculum is outstanding. Every advantage is taken of the purpose built accommodation and high quality resources to provide a stimulating learning environment, both indoors and outside. The imaginatively designed curriculum is underpinned by the meticulous recording of children's progress across all areas of learning. A strong focus on teaching basic skills, particularly the systematic teaching of sounds and letters, means children gain a very good grounding in early reading skills. The promotion of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and consistent attention to these areas is evident in curriculum plans. These take account of the wide cultural mix across the Nursery and include many opportunities for children to celebrate their own cultural heritage and learn about others.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



30 January 2012

Dear Children

### **Inspection of Lea Nursery School, Slough, SL2 5 JW**

You may remember that I recently visited your school to see how well you are being helped to learn. I am writing to thank you for being so friendly and helpful. I thought you would like to know what I found out. You go to an outstanding Nursery that does many things extremely well.

- You really enjoy going to Nursery and learning new things.
- All the adults do a wonderful job in helping you to learn.
- You behave really well and get along with everyone.
- You have a great many exciting things to do.
- You listen to one another and the adults very well, and you are making a good start in learning to read, write and count.
- The headteacher and staff take really good care of you and are always looking for ways to make the Nursery even better.

It was good to see so many of your parents during the 'Dads in School' day. This helped them see how the adults help you to learn. The school is planning to do more of this kind of thing so that your families get to know the school better. I think this is a great idea. Remember to invite them along whenever you can.

I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton  
Lead inspector

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