

Chalvey Early Years Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109765
Local Authority	Slough
Inspection number	356620
Inspection dates	18–19 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Kerry Rochester

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Redman-Brown
Headteacher	Diane Lister
Date of previous school inspection	30 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 10 lessons. All four teachers and the nursery practitioners were observed. The inspectors looked at a sample of the children's work as seen in their 'assessment books', displays and photographs. Meetings were held with governors and staff, and inspectors looked at school documentation including the school's self-evaluation form, the school development plan, children's progress records and safeguarding documents. They also considered the views of parents and carers expressed in 103 questionnaires that were returned, and the views of staff in the questionnaires that they returned.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of strategies to raise achievement in children's language, literacy and calculation skills, particularly those who are at an early stage of learning English.
- The effectiveness of the role of nursery practitioners and their impact on learning and progress.
- The use of assessments to challenge children and accelerate their progress.
- The impact of leadership and management since the federation of the school.

Information about the school

Chalvey Early Years Centre is a large nursery which is culturally diverse; the largest groups of children come from Pakistani, Black African, and mixed ethnic backgrounds. A very large majority of children speak English as an additional language and a large majority are often at an early stage of learning to speak English when they start at the school. The proportion of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. These needs relate mainly to communication and emotional difficulties. The nursery has an assessment unit with ten places for children with speech, language and communication difficulties, including autism. Since the last inspection, the school has become part of a federation with another nursery and an executive headteacher has been appointed. In January 2011, the school moved into new premises.

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

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The overall effectiveness of the nursery is good. The headteacher has successfully ensured that the challenge of federating Chalvey Early Years Centre with another nursery has been handled sensitively. Although the children and staff have only been in the new building for three months, she has ensured a positive start.

The good induction procedures support the good care, guidance and support given to the children and ensure that every child settles quickly, attends regularly and develops good attitudes to learning. The children enjoy coming to school; they feel safe and secure and lead healthy lifestyles. A strength of the school is its success in promoting good behaviour and creating a caring, calm and orderly community where children of all ethnic groups enjoy working and playing together. The good relationships between staff, children and their parents and carers help children to be happy and gain confidence. Parents and carers value and support the nursery. As one parent said, 'The staff are very helpful and friendly and I am going to be very sad when my child leaves in September!' Through the strong links with the local community, the school develops the children's knowledge and understanding of their local and international communities effectively. This supports the school's good promotion of community cohesion.

The vast majority of children enter the school with a much narrower range of skills and knowledge than is usual for their age, particularly in language and communication. Regardless of background or ability, all children are given an equal opportunity to achieve and make good progress, so by the time they leave the nursery, their attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. An inclusive and positive ethos pervades everything the school does. Children from the assessment unit enjoy working alongside their peers during activity time. Staff support them well, meeting their individual needs, and as a result they make good progress.

The children benefit from good teaching which is lively and stimulating and teachers are skilled at using signing and visual stimuli to help them learn. Role play inspires those at an early stage of learning English, and enables them to interact socially, rehearse and practise their speaking and develop their language and vocabulary so they make rapid progress in their understanding of English. A range of assessment systems is used throughout the nursery in order to evaluate the children's progress. However, these are not used regularly or consistently enough by all staff and so children's learning is sometimes over-directed and staff are not always clear about what learning is taking place or how to plan their next steps. The monitoring of teaching and learning is effective, as evident in the good quality on offer. However, a few aspects identified for improvement are not always sufficiently followed up by the management team and this is already a priority for further development. Currently, the roles of middle managers are

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underdeveloped. However, the headteacher has recognised this and plans are in hand to develop their role in monitoring and evaluating provision.

Improvement since the last inspection has been positive, with good features in how the federation and move have been managed. The weaker aspect of mathematical language and counting, identified during the previous inspection, has been addressed through the introduction of daily counting sessions and the use and reinforcement of mathematical language by the staff, as seen in lessons during the inspection. The clear vision of the headteacher, accurate school self-evaluation, the commitment of the management team, strengths in teaching, care, guidance and support, and the overall consolidation of children's good progress mean that the school has a good capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the assessment process by:
 - ensuring consistency in recording and using assessment information to inform the next steps in children's learning
 - ensuring assessments are regularly carried out while children are learning
 - improving nursery practitioners' skills in using and analysing assessment information so that through observations they can more effectively analyse the strengths and areas for development in children and support their learning.
- Improve the overall leadership and management of the Nursery by:
 - increasing the involvement of middle managers and their impact on the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, as well as their contribution to the school's self-evaluation.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

2

Children join nursery with skills that are generally below those typical for their age and by the time they leave, their achievement is good. They are making good progress in all areas of their learning and leave broadly in line with the expected level for their age. Those at the early stages of learning English receive good bilingual support from staff, enabling them to make rapid progress in understanding English. Children in the assessment unit and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as their needs are identified quickly and met well.

Classroom puppets are used to challenge children to keenly explore ideas for themselves and develop their imagination. In a good lesson, the puppet was skilfully used to engage a child in a conversation; the puppet then whispered in the child's ear and the child then confidently told the teacher what the puppet had said. The skilful way teachers use these puppets to model language, ask questions and engage the children in informal conversations has a very positive effect on children's speaking and communication skills. Their development in counting is reinforced throughout the day. Teachers use opportunities to count and find numbers on the number line during register and activity time and children keenly find and replace them. In one lesson, the children were keen to learn about positional language because work was interesting and was made purposeful through the effective use of information and communication technology (ICT).

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There are frequent opportunities for children to choose and handle good quality books and read with a member of staff. They are keen and enthusiastic and rapidly learn to enjoy books, know which way up to hold a book, how to turn the pages and that the pictures and the print tell a story.

Attendance is broadly average and there are effective procedures in place such as flexible drop-off times, which have improved punctuality. Children are confident when exploring the activities that are set out for them and discovering for themselves what they can do. This results in good behaviour and children willing to work together, to share and happily take turns. They enjoy taking on small responsibilities, such as tidying away their activities, and have a good understanding of how to stay healthy; they enjoy snacks of fruit and vegetables and know that milk and water are good for them. They maintain good hygiene and know to wash their hands before eating fruit. They follow rules and routines well which helps things to run smoothly, giving the children a sense of responsibility to the nursery community. Children enjoy their outdoor activities, which provide them with plenty of exercise.

Relationships between the children and staff are good. Links are developed with their key workers from when children first come to nursery. This results in children feeling secure, which enables them to participate in all activities on offer. Consequently, children enjoy learning and make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children celebrate festivals of children from different cultures attending the nursery, play together happily and enjoy raising money for different charities.

Children are rightly proud of their 'assessment books' that provide an ongoing record of their achievements. Children spend time with the teachers choosing the work for these books and chat with great pleasure and enthusiasm about the photographs and samples of work displayed in them.

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These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment ¹	3
The quality of children's learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
Children's behaviour	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Children's attendance ¹	3
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The staff take good care of the children. Right from the start, there are strong links made with the key workers, who work with parents and carers to support and develop children's personal, social and emotional development. As a result, the children are happy and sociable. When they need help, they are confident in approaching their key worker or other members of staff, who ensure their needs are met. When planning activities, the staff follow the interests of the children and question them to promote thinking and learning about their activities. Consequently, children are interested and motivated to become independent and explore their activities. The curriculum is appropriately matched to children's needs and gives them access to all areas of learning throughout the day.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the wider world are supported by a range of trips and visitors into school. The support for the most vulnerable children is good. For example, the school has appointed a family support worker who works closely with families experiencing a range of difficulties.

Teaching is good overall, and this enables children to make good progress and achieve well. Teachers' subject knowledge and their appreciation of how young children learn are good and staff make appropriate use of resources such as interactive whiteboards. However, the contribution that nursery practitioners make to children's learning, although

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developing, is satisfactory rather than good. Assessment information is not used routinely enough by nursery practitioners to guide children precisely in their next steps of learning and opportunities are sometimes missed to challenge children.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has ensured a successful federation. She has a clear vision for the school and has established a sense of teamwork where staff share common goals. Currently, the headteacher and the assistant headteacher carry direct responsibility for all monitoring and evaluation of provision, which gives them a wide span of activity. The headteacher has an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses. The senior leadership team's effective monitoring of the quality of teaching has helped to bring about improvements but middle managers do not have enough opportunities to observe colleagues in the classrooms in order to judge the success of actions taken to improve provision.

Safeguarding has a high priority, policies are of good quality and there are effective procedures in place to ensure children's safety. The staff fully meet the requirements for children's welfare and have a good understanding of policy and procedures. Equal opportunities are well promoted, so that all children have equal access to what the nursery has to offer. Community cohesion is promoted well. The school regularly celebrates the richness and diversity of its own community and the relationships between children from a range of different ethnic backgrounds are harmonious. School leaders have a comprehensive understanding of the school's socio-economic, religious and ethnic context, and local and international links are developing well.

Governors are satisfactorily involved in setting the strategic direction of the school through their involvement in school improvement planning and their visits to the school. They are supportive and make a good contribution through working in a close partnership with the headteacher to embed ambition and drive improvement. Other curriculum partnerships are wide-ranging and have a satisfactory impact on children's well-being.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers hold positive views of the school. They are very supportive and say that their children enjoy coming to school and feel safe. They are appreciative and speak highly about the quality care and support provided by the staff. This view was supported by the inspection team, who found that the quality of care, guidance and support was good. A small number of parents and carers voiced concerns about the information they receive on their children's progress. The inspection team found that the nursery provides opportunities for parents to meet with staff and discuss their children's progress when sharing their assessment books.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Chalvey Early Years Centre to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 103 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 135 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	82	80	20	19	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	80	78	21	20	2	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	65	63	34	33	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	68	66	34	33	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	73	71	30	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	63	61	35	34	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	59	57	37	36	1	1	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	53	51	43	42	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	60	58	38	37	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	57	55	42	41	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	59	57	38	37	1	1	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	63	61	36	35	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	79	77	23	22	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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 children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
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 children. 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	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well children acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

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.



20 May 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Chalvey Early Years Centre, Slough SL1 2SP

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your nursery recently. We enjoyed meeting you and talking to you about what you are learning. You clearly enjoy coming to school and working with your teachers and friends. This is what we found out about your nursery.

- You all feel safe and are well cared for by the staff.
- Your nursery provides you with a good start to your education.
- You are all making good progress and are beginning to know about so many different things.
- You behave well and get on well with one another.

We are asking your nursery to do a few things to make it even better.

- We want the adults who help you to make sure they record more often what you can do so that they can use this information to help you can make even better progress.
- We would like staff to be more involved in looking at each other's work so that everyone can make learning even more enjoyable for you.

I shall always remember my visit to your nursery and I am sure you will want to help your school by continuing to work hard in your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Kerry Rochester

Lead inspector

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