

Maidenhead Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109756
Local Authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	356618
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Susan Mann HMI

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Galbraith and Helen Bui
Headteacher	Helen McHale
Date of previous school inspection	18 March 2008
School address	School Lane Maidenhead Berkshire SL6 7PG
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. They observed a total of five staff teaching groups of children. They also observed all staff present teaching children during child-initiated activities when children freely move between activities both indoors and outdoors as they choose. The inspectors met the headteacher, senior leadership team and governors. They spoke with parents and carers and children during the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at children's work and assessment records, curriculum planning, school development documentation, and minutes of meetings. They also read the 26 parent questionnaires that were returned, together with staff questionnaires.

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

- The consistency of quality in teaching and learning.
- The impact of liaison with other providers, most notably with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The outcomes for children from all groups, and the engagement of all families within the setting.
- The effectiveness of the senior leadership team in improving provision and outcomes, especially in communication, language and literacy, and also in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy.
- The success of strategies used by the school to tackle attendance issues.

Information about the school

Maidenhead Nursery School offers sessional early years provision for children aged from three to under five years of age. There are also breakfast and lunch clubs available, both of which are managed by the school's governing body. The nursery currently manages a small children's centre on the same site. The nursery is of average size compared with schools offering similar provision and has 80 children on roll. The school has had both a new headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body since it was previously inspected in 2008.

Children attending the school come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and a minority of children speak English as an additional language. Children from White British heritage represent approximately 44% of the total number. There are a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school gained the Eco-Schools Bronze award in November 2010.

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

Maidenhead Nursery School is a good school. Its ethos is wholly child-centred and it has many outstanding features. Children enjoy their time at nursery and are eager to attend, coming in full of enthusiasm and expectation when they arrive. They relish an excellent curriculum that is highly relevant to their individual needs and provides an exceptional level of challenge in many instances. In the main, this is delivered through carefully structured child-initiated play, when children choose to play in the classrooms or outdoors. The excellent activities, superb resources, and high level of choice available to children result in outstanding progress and achievement for all groups of children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, albeit with some variation in consistency. The outstanding element of teaching and the strong emphasis on child-initiated play mean that all children receive high quality learning experiences during their sessions. However, children's play-based learning is not always extended fully by some staff. In addition, the learning for children during group times varies considerably and is dependent on the member of staff leading the session. Most group times are superb and present exciting learning opportunities where children sit enthralled and are challenged exceptionally well in their learning and development. Very occasionally, group times can be a little more perfunctory and there is not quite the same emphasis on exciting learning and individual enjoyment. The headteacher has already identified the organisation of group times as an area for future development.

Outcomes for children are outstanding overall. All parents' and carers' questionnaires indicate that they feel the school keeps their children safe. Children demonstrate excellent attitudes towards managing risks and keeping themselves safe as they play. For example, two children built a tower of large bricks in the outdoor area, and discussed what action was needed to make the tower safe to step onto. Children's behaviour throughout the school is exemplary. They are kind to one another and are exceptionally confident. Almost all display very high levels of self-assurance that are well above the development expectations of their age. This is because the enabling environment promotes independent learning. Furthermore, children display an excellent understanding of inclusive interaction with one another. As a consequence, the extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their developing skills for the future are outstanding.

The quality of care, guidance and support offered to children and their families is exemplary, and a strong, caring ethos lies at the heart of the nursery's provision. Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parent questionnaires are unanimous in expressing satisfaction with all aspects of the nursery. Parents and carers are welcomed into the nursery on a daily basis, and are given a wealth of information about the curriculum and their children's learning and progress. Many parents and carers are eager

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to share their time and expertise to enrich children's experiences, such as through participating in 'Dads' Story Week'. For this, a number of fathers visited the nursery to read a story to the children. This enriches children's learning and provides memorable experiences, such as a father who played the tuba to illustrate the story of 'Postman Pat and the Tuba'. The arrangements for safeguarding are excellent and protect children's welfare extremely well.

The nursery promotes a highly inclusive attitude and it strives to meet the needs of every family. The effectiveness of provision for equal opportunity is outstanding. The nursery is rigorous in its monitoring of children's progress, including those children from minority ethnic backgrounds. Any gaps in achievement between the different groups of children are known and have either closed or are closing rapidly as a result of targeted intervention. Partnerships are good. The school works hard to develop a wide range of successful partnerships with a range of schools and external agencies to enhance provision and services. There are informal arrangements to liaise with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage used by families at the setting. However, these are not sufficiently well embedded to provide a regular dialogue to promote a shared approach to children's learning and well-being by all providers.

Resources are managed very well, and together with excellent outcomes, this provides outstanding value for money. The nursery school's capacity for sustained improvement is good. The headteacher and governing body have a very clear view of the priorities for development, and many improvements have already been made since the headteacher took up her post. Self-evaluation is accurate. The headteacher makes an exceptional contribution to pursuing ambitious strategies for future development that prioritise the needs of the children. She is conspicuously successful in inspiring children, parents and carers, staff and governors to strive for excellence and is dedicated to promoting excellent practice.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance the quality of children's learning by refining the delivery and impact of group times, so that children are motivated to learn consistently throughout each session.
- Develop partnerships further with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage to enable children who attend more than one early years setting to benefit from collaboration concerning their learning and development.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

1

Children make outstanding progress at the nursery school and enjoy their learning exceptionally well. The level of attainment when children start is extremely variable but it is above average overall by the time children leave the nursery. Exceptional progress is achieved without compromising children's enjoyment and the large majority of children's learning is achieved through child-initiated play. The views of many parents and carers are summed up by one parent who said, 'Maidenhead Nursery provides an excellent and positive learning environment and our child loves being there. Facilities and staff are excellent and we cannot speak highly enough of our son's nursery experience.'

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The headteacher makes rigorous use of data analysis to assess the progress of individual children and groups within each cohort. These include children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, boys and girls, children from minority ethnic groups, and those who speak English as an additional language. Records indicate that gaps in attainment between the highest and lowest achieving groups have narrowed significantly and are now minimal or non-existent. This is because each child's learning is individually planned according to his/her identified next steps in learning, so that each receive a high level of consistent challenge. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make exceptional progress. This is because of realistic target setting in their individual education plans and excellent liaison with parents, carers and external agencies. Nursery school data are corroborated by children's summative assessment records and Learning Journeys which demonstrate rapid progression towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

Outcomes for being healthy are good. Children know about nutritious foods through their regular cookery sessions and other curriculum content. They benefit significantly from daily opportunities for fresh air and physical exercise, playing outdoors. Children's understanding of hygiene is developing. For example, the nursery's efforts to remind children to wash their hands after using the toilet are not always evident in children's personal routines. Children make a valuable contribution to the community of the nursery school and local area. They are very confident to say what they enjoy and staff are keen to adapt and include activities in the curriculum to suit their interests although this is often done on a spontaneous basis which means it is not always consistent. Children have developed their own nursery rules and they demonstrate a very good understanding of them. This ensures they feel exceptionally safe, something their invariably happy demeanour when at nursery makes abundantly clear.

Attendance is above average. A large number of mitigating factors affect rates of attendance, such as age-related illness, family holidays, and children not taking their full session entitlement. The nursery works very hard to encourage parents and carers to bring their children to nursery.

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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	1
Taking into account:	2
Children's attainment ¹	2
The quality of children's learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
Children's behaviour	1
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	1
Taking into account:	2
Children's attendance ¹	2
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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 provision is good overall. Children enjoy a stimulating and enabling environment which promotes learning in all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff know the children very well and this allows them to tailor the curriculum and learning opportunities to children's needs and interests. Assessment records are generally comprehensive and indicate targets for children to be challenged in their development. Staff meet frequently to adjust the curriculum so that it provides opportunities for children to fulfil their next steps of development.

Children's learning and development are enhanced by the very high priority given to their emotional well-being. The nursery school make excellent use of the Process Orientated Monitoring System (POMS) to measure children's well-being and involvement. This is particularly valuable for those children who may be facing a change in circumstances at home. Furthermore, the outstanding level of care, guidance and support is enhanced by the work of the family support workers who provide courses such as the 'Triple P' parenting course. The extended breakfast club provides an exceptionally caring and welcoming environment for children at the start of their day. The popular lunch club enables children to develop their independence in eating, such as opening packets and peeling fruit independently.

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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	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school has strong leadership which is dedicated to continuous development and improved outcomes for children. The management of teaching and learning is good. The headteacher has an accurate view of the quality of teaching through regular monitoring and performance management. The senior leadership team has taken effective action to address areas identified as in need of development. In particular, children's achievement in communication, language and literacy and all aspects of mathematical development have improved strongly as a result of targeted and successful delivery of initiatives. The governing body fulfils its role well. Governors visit the school regularly to provide support and this enables them to gauge the day-to-day running of the nursery. Governors provide a good level of challenge in holding the school to account and they ensure that self-evaluation and development planning is rigorous.

Procedures to safeguard children's welfare are exemplary. All staff and governors receive an excellent level of relevant training, and procedures to check the suitability of adults are extremely thorough. The school's tenacity to achieve support and protection for vulnerable children is testament to the high priority adults place on children's safety and well-being. The nursery demonstrates its strong contribution to promoting community cohesion through a good audit of provision. Some strands of this are very well developed, including the local and global elements. Families come together at the nursery to share their cultures and celebrate diversity through events such as World Food Day.

The school is a happy nursery where children know they are valued and cared for. It embraces the wide range of cultures and backgrounds represented by the families who attend, and has inclusion at its heart.

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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	1
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

The inspection team reviewed 26 parents' and carers' questionnaires. This represents a response rate slightly below the national average for nursery schools. All statements received a positive response, with many proportions of strongly/agree above the national average. The proportion of parents and carers who feel the school informs them about their children's progress was in line with the national average, as was the degree to which the school meets children's individual needs. The proportion of parents and carers who agree that the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns was slightly below the national average of 95%. The proportion of parents and carers who strongly agree that the school helps their child to have a healthy lifestyle is high, at 62%. Inspectors found that while children are encouraged to eat healthy foods and have lots of physical exercise, some hygiene issues are not well established in children's routines. The proportion of parents and carers who strongly agree that the school keeps their children safe is high, at 77%. Inspectors graded the extent to which children feel safe and the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements to be outstanding.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Maidenhead Nursery School 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 26 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 80 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	77	6	23	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	12	46	13	50	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	12	46	14	54	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	58	11	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	58	11	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	62	10	38	0	0	0	0
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)	11	42	13	50	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	42	14	54	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	42	15	58	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	46	12	46	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	62	10	38	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	73	7	27	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.



16 June 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Maidenhead Nursery School, Maidenhead, SL6 7PG

Thank you for welcoming us to your nursery school when we visited recently. It was lovely to meet you all and to see the interesting things that you do when you are at nursery.

We think your nursery is a good nursery, and that it has lots of very good things about it. We were very impressed with your excellent behaviour and the way you are so kind to one another.

You are very good at thinking about how to make sure you and your friends stay safe when at the nursery. We also liked the way you work so hard at your learning, and we think you are all doing extremely well because of this.

We enjoyed watching you play with all the lovely toys you have, and doing the exciting activities like the painting and outdoor play activities. We also enjoyed listening to the story about 'Postman Pat and the Tuba' with real tuba sounds in it.

We think your teachers look after you very well and they help you learn a lot. We have asked them to help you even more by making sure you have lots of interesting things to do. We have also asked them to work as closely as they can with other settings and childminders to make sure teaching is as good as it can possibly be at all times. You can help by always listening really hard to what your teachers say, and telling them what you enjoy doing.

We were pleased to see you all having such a lovely time at nursery. Thank you for talking to us and sharing your play with us.

Yours sincerely

Susan Mann

Her Majesty's Inspector

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