

# The Lawns Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109758
<b>Local Authority</b>	Windsor and Maidenhead
<b>Inspection number</b>	377980
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Wendy Ratcliff HMI

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>	3–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	131
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Paula Shepheard
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sarah Cottle and Mrs Carolyn Blackwell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 April 2009
<b>School address</b>	Imperial Road Windsor SL4 3RU
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector. They observed a total of four staff teaching groups of children. They observed a total of 13 staff overall teaching children child-initiated activities when children move freely between activities both indoors and outdoors as they choose. The inspectors met with the executive headteacher, acting headteacher, senior leadership team, staff who support the nurture group and the chair of governors. They spoke with parents and carers and children during the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of children's work, together with the children. They looked at the school's documentation, including school policies, assessment records, curriculum planning, attendance figures, school development planning and minutes of meetings. They evaluated 52 parents' and carers' questionnaires.

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

- The quality of children's learning and progress for different groups, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, children speaking English as an additional language, those from minority ethnic groups and boys.
- The impact on outcomes for different groups of children as a result of partnership working.
- The way in which the school uses tracking and assessment information to modify provision for those identified as needing extra support.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management in ensuring high standards are being sustained and improved further.

## Information about the school

The Lawns is a large nursery school and children's centre. A proportion of children join the school at different times of the year because of the turnover of families moving in and out of the area, partly the result of its proximity to a military base. As a result of a change in admissions across the local authority, the majority of children now join the nursery just after their third birthday and move to primary school when they reach the age of four. Children come from a range of different ethnic backgrounds and a minority of children speak English as an additional language. The majority of children are from a White British heritage. There has been an increase in the number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities since the last inspection. Children attend either a morning or afternoon session. There is a lunch club and some children attend for a full day.

The children's centre opened in 2008 and provides a range of services to support children and families in the community. A pre-school on the school site caters for children from two to five years. This is managed by a private provider and was not part of this inspection. The previous headteacher left in July 2011 and the governing body have made interim arrangements for the leadership and management of the school, with both an executive and acting headteacher in place. The school has achieved a number of awards, including Healthy Schools and the Eco-Schools Silver.

**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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

The Lawns Nursery School is outstanding and provides an exceptionally rich, stimulating and nurturing education for the children. As a result, children make excellent progress from their different starting points. Almost all parents and carers describe high levels of satisfaction with the school. The parents and carers spoken to praised the dedication of the staff and confirm the outstanding care, guidance and support their children receive. This is substantiated by the many written comments received, such as, 'they show huge care and concern for my child', and 'it is a creative, safe and nurturing environment that lays excellent foundations for a lifelong love of learning and curiosity'.

Children are extremely active and inquisitive learners, who show high levels of motivation. They respond with curiosity to excellent teaching, high quality resources and an extensive range of stimulating and imaginative experiences indoors and outdoors. For example, children develop their problem-solving skills and negotiate with one another as they work out how they will retrieve a conker from the netting draped below the outdoor canopy. An adult skilfully uses this opportunity to extend the children's learning as they count conkers and find one more or one less. Children achieve exceptionally well as they meet and frequently exceed the expectations for their age and make excellent progress across all areas of learning. The support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for those speaking English as an additional language, is outstanding. Staff are highly skilled in the use of assessment to support children's learning. They quickly identify those who would benefit from extra support and work exceptionally well with a range of other professionals to ensure children achieve as well as they can.

The school promotes outstanding equality of opportunity because inclusion is at the heart of its work. The school is rigorous in its assessment of children's progress, including those speaking English as an additional language. As a result, any gaps in achievement are known and are reducing rapidly, including that of boys and children from minority ethnic groups.

The outstanding practice identified at the last inspection has been sustained and developed further. There has been a recent change in the leadership and management of the nursery and the governing body has been highly instrumental in ensuring that the school continues to provide outstanding care and education for the children. The executive and acting headteachers are passionate about the school's continued success. Together with the staff, they have expertly and skilfully adapted

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the planning and provision in order to meet the needs of the younger children now attending. The school constantly seeks ways to improve children's achievement even further based on their starting points. For example, as a result of the exciting opportunities, particularly for boys, to 'mark make' while playing outdoors, children achieve well in writing. This term, even more exciting activities have been devised to help children with their grasp of calculation and the school rightly recognises that even more can be done to enhance the opportunities for children to link sounds and letters. The school has excellent capacity for further improvement.

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

- Enhance the opportunities for children to link sounds and letters in order to further raise attainment across all aspects of communication, language and literacy.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of children****1**

Children love coming to the nursery and highly enjoy the time they spend there, with the result that attendance is above average. One parent reports, 'My child regularly enthuses about his day and is excited to go to school.' Children's personal development and well-being are excellent because staff provide warm physical and emotional care so that children feel safe and secure. There is a high emphasis on developing children's social skills when they first start at the nursery. Children behave extremely well and cooperate with each other regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. Adults provide many opportunities for children to value and celebrate differences. They are developing an excellent understanding of how to deal with conflict and know what is right from wrong. Older children encourage the younger ones to sit nicely at carpet time using signing and gentle reminders. Therefore, children have exceptional moral and social skills and their awareness of diversity for their age and stage of development is excellent.

Children are keen to explore and investigate. They develop a highly secure understanding of keeping themselves safe as they take safe risks in their play, for example, as they consider how to help teddy who is stuck in the tree. Children's physical development is outstanding as they skilfully manoeuvre around obstacles as they pedal tricycles, and use scissors, tape and boxes to make a spaceship while outdoors. Inside, they use the whiteboard to draw intricate pictures of a castle and use a reference book to copy a gargoyle water feature, carefully showing the rainwater pouring out of its mouth.

Children are developing excellent skills for their future through the use of technology, such as computers and SMART boards. They are adept at using the mouse and using controls. Children adopt excellent hygiene practices and remember to cover the fruit up after they select their healthy snack. They understand that physical activity makes them warm and recognise when they need to pour themselves some water or remove a layer of clothing.

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The skills and knowledge that the children have when they start at the nursery is variable, but broadly in line with age-related expectations. Most children exceed the expectations for their age, across all the areas of learning, when they leave to start primary school. Children achieve extremely well in communication, language and literacy, but the staff’s close analysis of assessment shows that children’s development in the linking of sounds and letters is weaker than other aspects. Staff have rightly identified this as area to improve.

*These are the grades for children’s outcomes*

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Children’s achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Children’s attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which children feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Children’s behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Children’s attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Excellent teamwork contributes to the highly effective teaching, both in small groups and during child-initiated play. Children are absorbed by enthusiastic teaching, with their interest fully captured as they find out about ‘Ten Wiggly Caterpillars’. Excellent use is made of props and staff are expert at challenging and stretching children’s learning with effective questioning. They know the children exceptionally well and have an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They use this knowledge to plan a wide range of stimulating activities to captivate the children’s interest. Children love exploring in the inside ‘jungle’ and using magnifying glasses in the forest outside, as they discover that a leaf has a ‘spiky’ looking edge. Children very excitedly use the dark tent in the quiet room and are fascinated with the effect of lights as they glow in the dark.

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

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The excellent partnerships the school has established in the community enables the children to experience further opportunities, such as the forest school in Windsor Great Park and Jo Jingles sessions. Children participate in fund-raising events for charity, send Christmas boxes to children living in poverty and make visits to sing to older people at the local day centre. These are just some examples of the school’s work and commitment to promoting community cohesion.

Staff are extremely good at noticing what children enjoy and how they are learning. At the end of each day, they meet to evaluate the day’s activities and the progress individuals and groups of children have made. They use this information to plan specific activities that build on children’s interest and to provide challenge to help all children reach their full potential across the areas of learning.

Assessment is used extremely rigorously to ensure each and every child’s learning is expertly planned for, including those who need extra support to develop their English skills and to extend more able children. Staff provide exceptional support for children’s emotional well-being, through programmes such as ‘Positive Touch’. Children’s progress is recorded in their learning journeys, to which parents and carers contribute. Children were highly enthusiastic to share their learning journeys or ‘favourite book’ with inspectors. They recall memorable experiences such as finding out about the Vikings and making a Viking axe.

The welfare needs of all children are met extremely well, including those who may be experiencing a change in their circumstance. Transition arrangements are outstanding. They ensure that each child settles quickly and develops excellent attitudes to learning and are then ready to move to primary school. This is meticulously planned for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets children’s needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

Leaders and managers have high aspirations and ensure continuous improvement through a range of rigorous monitoring and evaluation activities. The governing body makes an exceptional contribution to the work of the school, providing a high level of challenge. Together with senior leaders, it has set ambitious targets, which are inspiring the school community to ensure each child continues to have equal access to high quality opportunities to enhance their learning even further. The school

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manages its resources extremely well to meet the needs of all children so that they achieve outstanding outcomes.

Staff morale is exceptionally high and continued professional development is fully embraced. For example, staff attended a ‘write dance’ workshop in order to increase their knowledge and support children to make even better progress in writing.

Procedures to safeguard children are outstanding. All staff and governors receive the relevant levels of training to ensure that all children are safe, including the procedures that are meticulously followed to ensure the suitability of all adults. The outstanding partnerships with both parents and carers and other professionals are highly effective. This is explicit in their work to support those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Parents and carers feel very well informed about the school, daily routines and their own child’s ‘learning journey’.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Views of parents and carers

There was a lower than average response to the Ofsted questionnaires. Parents and carers who completed questionnaires and spoke to inspectors were extremely positive about the school. The many positive comments often refer to the excellent opportunities children are experiencing and the dedication of the staff: for example, ‘the teachers are fantastic’, ‘they show huge care and concern for my child’ and ‘a very wide range of activities and fabulous themes’. Very few parents and carers voiced reservations relating to individual concerns. These did not follow any specific pattern.



### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at The Lawns 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 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 131 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	81	8	15	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	83	7	13	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	33	63	15	29	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	62	14	27	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	71	12	23	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	35	67	12	23	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	69	11	21	1	2	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)	29	56	16	31	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	34	65	15	29	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	65	10	19	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	75	9	17	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	38	73	9	17	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	40	77	10	19	0	0	1	2

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 and 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.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



30 September 2011

Dear Children

**Inspection of The Lawns Nursery School, Windsor, SL4 3RU**

Thank you for such a warm welcome when we came to visit your nursery school. We very much enjoyed our visit, talking with you and all the adults, and seeing the exciting things that you do. It was extremely special that some of you shared your 'learning journeys' with us, remembering things you have really enjoyed, like making a Viking axe. It was wonderful to see you exploring in the forest, finding treasure in the sand and singing along with Jo Jingles. You get on extremely well with one another and your behaviour is excellent.

We think your nursery is outstanding and the adults are very skilled at caring for you, keeping you safe and making sure you do as well as you can in your learning. You make outstanding progress in your learning. Those in charge are very good at knowing how to make things even better.

We have asked the adults to help you get even better when you link sounds and letters. You can help your teachers by always trying your very best. Thank you for letting us share your play.

Enjoy your time at nursery and continue to have lots of fun.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Ratcliff  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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