

Cippenham Nursery School

St Andrew's Way, Cippenham, Slough, SL1 5NL

Inspection dates

13–14 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Staff are not checking what children know and can do often enough to plan the precise next steps in their learning.
- Children's progress in the knowledge of letters and sounds, and mathematics is not fast enough because these aspects are not included in a sufficiently wide range of activities.
- There are not enough planned opportunities for children to think critically and solve problems.
- Support staff are not always used well enough to support children's learning throughout each session.
- Children, especially those registered for the afternoon, do not attend often enough. Some arrive late and do not stay until the end of the session.
- Leaders and managers, including members of the governing body, observe classroom teaching and the implementation of the action plan, but do not check rigorously enough the impact of these on children's progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in their personal, social, emotional and physical development.
- Multilingual staff help children to learn well in their own language, and to communicate clearly in English.
- By modelling good quality spoken English, singing songs, playing alongside children and telling stories staff help children to make good progress in their spoken language development.
- Most children behave well and show good attitudes to learning. They particularly enjoy sharing books and stories with an adult.
- Children show respect for their friends from different communities, happily celebrating the festivals from different faiths.
- Visits broaden children's experiences of different environments, and visitors to the nursery teach them how to stay safe when out in the community.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed six hours of teaching and learning activities in the Nursery, often accompanied by the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of staff, and representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- Six parents and carers completed the on-line survey Parent View. Inspectors spoke to parents and carers as they brought their children to the nursery. They also looked at the written comments parents and carers made when their children left the nursery last year.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation and policies, including the school's self-evaluation form, safeguarding arrangements and records to check the quality of teaching.

Inspection team

Kath Beck, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This nursery is similar in size to other nursery schools nationally. Children attend either in the morning or the afternoon each day of the week.
- Many more children come from diverse minority ethnic backgrounds than in most schools of this size.
- One third of the children are at an early stage of learning to speak English.
- The proportion of disabled children and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is similar to the national picture. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than in most schools.
- The headteacher took up her duties in December 2011.
- Six members of staff have recently returned following long-term leave of absence.
- The school has a substantial number of staff who work part time.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for its children.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to consistently good by ensuring that all staff:
 - assess frequently what children know and can do and use the information to plan the next steps in their learning
 - in their planning, make clear what children are to learn from the activities
 - promote children's knowledge of letters, sounds and mathematics skills in a wide range of play activities
 - provide children with increased opportunities to think critically and solve problems
 - are deployed efficiently throughout each session to support children's learning.
- Make sure that children, especially those who have afternoon places, attend as often as possible, arrive on time and stay until the end of the session.
- Ensure that leaders and managers, including members of the governing body, check precisely whether the current staffing arrangements and the objectives in the action plan are increasing the rate at which children progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children's achievements, including those of disabled children and those with special educational needs, are inconsistent because checks on what they know and can do are not carried out often enough to plan activities that provide an increased level of challenge. Data show that children's attainment was not as high, and progress from varied starting points was not as good, as in the previous year.
- Children's progress in early literacy skills is adequate. It is not good because not all staff know the best ways in which to help children learn the sounds that letters make. They do not plan sufficient fun ways to develop these skills in play activities to help children make all the progress they could.
- When challenged appropriately children are imaginative and learn to be expressive with their ideas in art and in their role play. They show their ability to think critically and solve problems, but there are not always sufficient activities for them to do this without the help of an adult.
- Data in 2012 showed that children's progress in their early mathematical skills was not good enough. Staff reorganised mathematics resources so that they are readily available. They do not check if children have taken part in activities set out for them. When children play games with an adult, they count how many times they kick the ball into the goal, but generally mathematics skills are not integrated into other activities.
- Children make good progress in their personal, social, and emotional development, playing happily together and keeping to the nursery rules. Many activities, including those supported by multilingual staff, promote children's spoken language well. Those with specific behavioural needs are helped to participate fully in all that the school offers and most make good progress in their social skills.
- Opportunities to take part in specialist activities led by a football coach, to ride on wheeled toys, to climb, balance and slide on their playground equipment help children to make good progress in their coordination and movements. Not all children learn to manage their own basic hygiene well, rarely washing their hands before eating their snack.
- Children have good opportunities to develop early mark-making skills, especially when using large chalks or painting on the playground. By the time they leave most children can write their name, but few write recognisable words.
- The quality of support for disabled children and those with special educational needs is varied. This means their progress also requires improvement. Much depends on the individual skills of the adults supporting them and the availability of advice from other professionals.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching over time requires improvement as shown by the decline in children's achievements over the past two years. Staffing arrangements to accommodate the very high number of staff who work part time mean there is inconsistency in the quality of teaching. Consequently, elements of good practice are not adequately shared. There are also insufficient opportunities for staff to meet to evaluate children's achievements and adapt activities daily to meet their precise needs.
- Staff do not plan activities indoors, or outdoors, in a way that ensures that they all understand what children are to gain from them. This means support staff are not deployed effectively in all classrooms. Some act spontaneously, playing with the children and developing a range of skills, while others take on a less productive supervisory role. In addition, not all staff make the most of opportunities to extend children's knowledge of the sounds letters make to set them on the route to reading or to develop their skills in counting and calculation.
- In the good sessions observed, staff built on children's interests, such as a fascination with pirates, to help them to think critically and solve problems. Children buried 'treasure' and

decided they wanted to make a treasure map to find it again. However, there are not enough opportunities for stimulating activities like these and staff wait too long for children to come up with their own ideas.

- Staff actively promote a happy atmosphere in which children can explore a wide range of media and materials, as well as express their thoughts and ideas in music, dance, drama and role play. Relationships are good and children know they can turn to any adult to help them if they are worried. In some classes snack time is used helpfully to develop children's skills in conversation, but again this is not always the case.
- Children new to speaking English receive good support from multilingual staff who help them to communicate effectively. Good assessments illustrate each child's level of English language acquisition and the aspects that need to be worked on next
- Classrooms are well organised and arranged so that children can be independent. Displays that children create illustrate their emerging skills and celebrate their efforts.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Attendance is not as good as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Most children attend the morning sessions frequently, but almost one fifth of the children with afternoon places do not attend regularly. Some parents and carers, in the morning and afternoon, bring their children to the nursery after the session has started and often expect to collect them ten minutes early. This means that children lose much valuable learning time over the year. Children who do not attend for four consecutive weeks are removed from the school's roll.
- Children are taught to behave well, to be kind, to take turns and to respect one another. The few children with significant behavioural difficulties are mostly managed well. On occasion their challenging behaviour is not 'nipped in the bud' quickly enough and this interrupts the learning of other children.
- Children's attitudes to learning are at their best when they are engaged in activities with adults where they find ways to solve problems, and think of new ways to do things. During the inspection children were captivated for some time thinking of how to build a den to play in on their 'pirate ship'. On these occasions children invite others to join in, share their toys well and make up their own stories.
- Parents, carers, staff and governors believe that children behave well. Children know that adults are interested in them and keen to listen to what they have to say. That said some children have found it hard to settle to the routines this term. Children from all backgrounds play harmoniously. No children have been excluded because they have bullied another child.
- Children enjoy attending lunch club. It gives them the opportunity to share a social occasion where they learn to eat politely and sensibly and benefit from their conversations with adults and with their friends.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Senior leaders, staff, and governors share the aim for children to be 'Happy to be here, to play, learn, care, share and be ourselves'. Together they have evaluated the school's provision to ensure this is the case. This evaluation led to an action plan that is centred accurately on improving teachers' planning, changes to the way children's interest in mathematics is stimulated, and consideration of the way in which children can sustain their involvement in activities. The plan has yet to be fully implemented.
- Staff leading the provision for disabled children and those with special educational needs, and for the introduction of a programme to help children learn the sounds letters make, are new to their roles. They are introducing new procedures and methods of working and are aware that they are not yet used consistently across classes.

- Performance management arrangements have been extended to all staff. Targets are based on whole-school developments. The link between children's achievements and rises in staff salaries is not as strong as it should be. Checks on the quality of teaching identify clear strengths and focus on the interaction between adults and children. They do not identify sharply enough the areas that require improvement.
 - Equality, diversity and an understanding of different cultures and languages in the school are promoted appropriately. Discrimination is tackled robustly.
 - Children's spiritual, moral and social development is promoted well. Children were amazed by the way in which dry paint became liquid and colours ran together when placed on the wet playground. When children do something that upsets another child staff promote their moral development effectively by encouraging them to apologise and make amends.
 - Most parents and carers spoken to during the inspection, those completing Parent View, and those who provided comments when their children left at the end of the year are supportive of the nursery. They particularly appreciate the way their children are helped to develop their social skills, and go on visits that give them experiences that compare their life in the city to that in the countryside.
 - The school has taken decisive action to work closely with parents and carers who might find engaging with the school difficult. A recently appointed family liaison officer is developing a partnership with parents and carers to promote better rates of punctuality and attendance. She is also assisting them in making sure their children can manage their personal needs, including going to the toilet independently.
 - The local authority has challenged and supported the nursery with regard to the introduction of a programme to promote children's language development. It has been successful in reducing the number of children transferring into Reception classes with spoken language difficulties. Consequently, the local authority takes a 'light touch' approach to this school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are active in their support for the school and attend training regularly to improve their skills. They use their expertise to monitor the budget carefully, oversee health and safety, and participate in visits out and special events. They know what is happening in school, and take part in annual training days that focus on identifying the school's strengths and areas for improvement. When visiting, governors look at what the staff and children are doing and believe this to be good. They do not look closely enough at the impact of the part-time staffing arrangements or the issues in the current action plan on children's progress. While governors are involved in decisions about salary progression, annual targets for staff to achieve do not always include a link to precise outcomes for children. This makes it difficult for them to hold senior staff fully to account for the outcomes for children. The governing body has made appropriate decisions about the way in which money is spent. With an increasing number of pupils coming to the nursery who speak Polish, it has rightly employed a part-time Polish speaker to help these children to become more confident and to acquire spoken English quickly. Recent improvements to the premises and an audit of policies and processes mean safeguarding arrangements are effective.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	109762
Local authority	Slough
Inspection number	401077

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	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	156
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Arthur
Headteacher	Ruth Clark
Date of previous school inspection	4–5 November 2009
Telephone number	01628 661506
Fax number	01628 605902
Email address	office@cns.slough.sch.uk

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