

# Walton Pre-Preparatory and Nursery

Independent School

Inspection report

|   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| DCSF Registration Number                        | 8266011             |
| Unique Reference Number                         | 134926              |
| URN for registered childcare<br>and social care | EY349307            |
| Inspection number                               | 330419              |
| Inspection dates                                | 19-20 November 2008 |
| Reporting inspector                             | Jim Henry           |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended. The inspection of childcare was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.

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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The inspection of registered provision<sup>1</sup> was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.

## Information about the school

Walton Pre-Preparatory School and Nursery is a small independent school situated near the Open University in Milton Keynes. It provides care and education for young children from 2 months to 7 years of age. There are 47 full time children on roll, with just two children above the age of 5 years, and 72 children aged 0-3 years in registered child care provision. No children at Walton have a statement of special educational needs and the majority have English as their first language. No children receive nursery education funding.

## Evaluation of the school

Walton pre-preparatory school and nursery provide a good quality of education. Children are happy and they thoroughly enjoy their education. They make good progress as a result of good and sometimes outstanding teaching. Their personal development and behaviour is outstanding due to the commitment of the headteacher and staff. The attention given to children's welfare, health and safety is good. The curriculum is good, being broad and well balanced, especially in the provision for outdoor activities. The school meets all but one of the statutory requirements.

## Quality of education

The curriculum for children aged 5 years to 7 years is good, and is broad and balanced; in work seen children were effectively developing their writing and number skills and scientific knowledge. Effective planning ensures that children develop basic skills well. Planning is thorough and takes account of children's needs. Staff know their children very well. Staff make good observations of children in sessions to

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<sup>1</sup> Schools which provide childcare for children from birth until the term in which they reach their third birthday must register this provision separately with Ofsted.

assess their progress and record this information through the evaluations in their planning. While this system of recording is effective overall, in some cases planning does not always consistently identify individual children's next steps for learning.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good overall with some examples of outstanding practice. However formal monitoring of teaching has yet to take place in order to identify and ensure consistently outstanding teaching. Teachers plan lessons well and incorporate a range and balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities that meet children's different needs effectively. All areas of learning for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are covered giving children opportunities to explore and be active learners. This was seen in a session for children aged three, who were investigating changes in the texture, colour and weight of sand after water had been poured over it. They were fully engaged in discussion which was well led by the class teacher. While staff make good use of questioning to check children's understanding and build on their previous knowledge, there are occasions during activities when staff miss teaching opportunities to fully develop children's language and vocabulary skills.

Children's attitude to learning is good and, in the older children, this is reflected in the presentation and the good standard of their work in English and mathematics. A variety of after school activities is offered, such as drama and photographic clubs, and these are well supported. Children are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

The assessments of children aged 2 years show that their abilities are above age-related expectations. From this starting point children make good progress in all areas of their learning and development. By Year 1 most children have exceeded the Early Years Learning Goals. Children continue to make good progress and by Year 2 are well above national expectations.

### Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Due to the provision made, children have very positive attitudes to their learning and readily attempt and enjoy learning activities. Children's behaviour is outstanding and they are helpful and polite to each other and staff. Children have a good understanding of the importance of staying safe. The school has an effective anti-bullying policy and positively promotes friendship and sharing through assemblies. Children respond well to the opportunities provided for social interaction and have the confidence to independently undertake self-initiated tasks. They willingly make a contribution to the school in helping staff and each other. Attendance is good and children readily take on responsibilities with great care.

Their enjoyment of learning and their cultural development is enhanced through opportunities to think and learn about other cultures and celebrations such as Diwali.

Children are given opportunities to reflect and say simple prayers of thanksgiving, especially before and after lunch time.

A wide range of activities and visitors to school make an effective contribution to children's personal development which is outstanding. Children across the school, work independently, choosing and sharing resources and equipment. This helps them respect each other and make positive contributions to their classroom communities.

## Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Provision for children's welfare, health and safety is good. Staff are committed to ensuring the welfare of children and the quality of supervision is high. Parents are very supportive of the school and fully appreciate the level of care that their children receive. The school has an effective behaviour policy and the relationships between staff and children are a real strength of the school. While policies and procedure are in place to safeguard children, the appropriate child protection training for the child protection officer is out-of-date. However, the school has put arrangements in place to address this swiftly. All the necessary risk assessments, including fire and health and safety checks, have taken place. There are effective procedures for the administration of medicines and supporting children who may fall ill.

Children are encouraged to follow an active and healthy lifestyle through plenty of opportunity for outdoor activities and physical education. Fruit is encouraged as a snack and water is available throughout the day. Lunches are healthy with fresh fruit, vegetables and meat served. Dietary needs are catered for. The school has an effective accessibility plan to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

## Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school has undertaken the necessary procedures to ensure that all staff are checked for their suitability to work with children and a single register of all staff is maintained.

## School's premises and accommodation

The school is accommodated in a converted Grade 2 listed building. The nursery and classrooms are well decorated and provide appropriate teaching space for the number of children on roll. The school has a room for information communication and technology (ICT) that also acts as a small library. There is a '*messy*' room for children to undertake practical activities such as painting. There are spacious gardens that are used to provide outdoor play and learning activities. There is a nature trail, a securely fenced pond, a plot of land for children to grow their own vegetables and a paved area for wheeled toys and sand and water trays. Two new classrooms have been built to provide facilities for the older children. Food is cooked on the premises and the children have their lunch in their classrooms. The school is attractive and well maintained.

## Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides a good range of information for parents and prospective parents. The prospectus and family information file contain details about appropriate policies including admissions, behaviour, discipline, exclusions and the school curriculum. There are also parental notice boards within the school that give parents information about daily activities and routines.

The school holds regular parental consultation evenings and provides parents with two written reports a year on the progress of their children. The overwhelming majority of parents are very supportive of the school. They feel that the staff are very approachable and friendly and appreciate the care and education that the school provides for their children. One parent wrote *"My children have developed their personalities, learning abilities and styles and they love the school, staff and all it offers."*

## Procedures for handling complaints

The school has appropriate written procedures for dealing with informal and formal complaints and this is available in school for any person requesting it.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision is good and the setting enables children to make good progress.

Children are enthusiastic and enjoy their learning. They are helped to learn and develop well; activities are well-organised, effectively planned and cover all areas of learning. Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding; they work independently, take turns, and willingly help one another and staff. They have a good understanding of how to be safe, and they respect and care for each other well. Children understand about healthy food and participate in regular exercise. They are well looked-after and supported by their key person and other staff and relationships between children and staff are very strong. Staff make good observations of children to assess their progress and plan further activities.

Good links have been forged with parents, and external agencies when necessary, so children settle into the routines of the EYFS quickly and happily. Parents are kept well-informed of their child's progress and various displays and photographic evidence show the extent of the learning which children are experiencing. All adults in the setting are suitably qualified and recruitment checks are rigorous. The staffing ratio is appropriate and they work strongly together as a team, so that the provision is effectively led and managed. A suitable development plan indicates that staff reflect regularly on the education and care provided and the welfare and safety of children are high priorities for the school.

Accommodation is suitable and used to best advantage, with the outdoor classroom effectively extending children's learning, although there is no covered area to use when the weather is inclement.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended ("the Regulations"), with the exception of those one listed below:

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- maintain up-to-date training for the designated child protection officer and staff (paragraph3(2)(b))

## What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- Develop the formal monitoring and evaluation of teaching in order to raise standards and the sharing of outstanding practice.
- Ensure that evaluation in planning consistently identifies the needs of individual children in their next steps of learning.

# Inspection Judgement Recording Form

| outstanding | good | satisfactory | inadequate |
|-------------|------|--------------|------------|
|-------------|------|--------------|------------|

## The quality of education

|  |  |   |  |  |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Overall quality of education   |  | √ |  |  |
| How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils |  | √ |  |  |
| How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs         |  | √ |  |  |
| How well pupils make progress in their learning  |  | √ |  |  |

## Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

|  |   |  |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | √ |  |  |  |
| The behaviour of pupils  | √ |  |  |  |

## Welfare, health and safety of pupils

|  |  |   |  |  |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils |  | √ |  |  |
|--|--|---|--|--|

## The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

|  |   |   |  |  |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?                              |   | √ |  |  |
| How well do children achieve in the Early Years Foundation Stage relative to their starting points and capabilities?       |   | √ |  |  |
| How good are the personal development and well-being of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?                      | √ |   |  |  |
| What is the quality of welfare, health and safety of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?                         |   | √ |  |  |
| How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?                                      |   | √ |  |  |
| What is the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage including, where relevant, the quality of childcare? |   | √ |  |  |



## School details

|   |  |           |           |
|---|--|-----------|-----------|
| Name of school  | Walton Pre-Preparatory and Nursery   |           |           |
| DCSF number   | 8266011  |           |           |
| Unique reference number                                       | 134926   |           |           |
| EY URN (for registered childcare only)                        | EY349307   |           |           |
| Type of school  | Nursery and Pre-preparatory  |           |           |
| Status  | Independent  |           |           |
| Date school opened  | July 2004  |           |           |
| Age range of pupils   | 0-7  |           |           |
| Gender of pupils  | Mixed  |           |           |
| Number on roll (full-time pupils)                             | Boys: 23   | Girls: 24 | Total: 47 |
| Number on roll (part-time pupils)                             | Boys: 0  | Girls: 0  | Total: 0  |
| Number of pupils aged 0-3 in registered childcare provision   | Boys: 34   | Girls: 38 | Total: 72 |
| Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need | Boys: 0  | Girls: 0  | Total: 0  |
| Number of pupils who are looked after                         | Boys: 0  | Girls: 0  | Total: 0  |
| Annual fees (day pupils)                                      | £8580  |           |           |
| Annual fees (childcare)                                       | £9280  |           |           |
| Address of school   | The Old Rectory<br>Walton Drive<br>Walton<br>Milton Keynes<br>Buckinghamshire<br>MK7 6BB |           |           |
| Telephone number  | 01908 678 403  |           |           |
| Fax number  | 01908 678 391  |           |           |
| Email address   | info@waltonpps.co.uk   |           |           |
| Headteacher   | Mrs C. Norman  |           |           |
| Proprietor  | Mrs H. Pauley  |           |           |
| Reporting inspector   | Jim Henry, AI  |           |           |
| Dates of inspection   | 19-20 November 2008  |           |           |