

Slade Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122970
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	340248
Inspection dates	28–29 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Joyce Cox

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	79
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ailsa Granne
Headteacher	Sue Vermes
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2010
School address	Titup Hall Drive Oxford OX3 8QQ
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Age group	3–5
Inspection dates	28–29 April 2010
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**Number of children on roll in the registered
childcare provision****Date of last inspection of registered
childcare provision**

Not previously inspected

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed the teachers, practitioners and teaching assistants in both the indoor and outdoor learning areas, for a total of around four hours. Inspectors talked to children, governors, staff, parents and carers as well as other professionals engaged in the centre's work. They observed both the maintained and the day nurseries' work in detail and looked at safeguarding procedures, children's records, development planning, governing body minutes and the 50 questionnaires submitted by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the centre's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how successfully adults develop and extend children's communication and language development
- how effectively adults build on what they know about the children to enrich their learning experiences
- how successfully the Nursery and Children's Centre delivers early childhood education and services for children under five and their families.

Information about the school

This setting comprises a maintained nursery for children aged between three and four years who mostly attend part time and a day nursery which opens from 8 am to 6 pm every weekday to provide full day care for children from birth to five years for 49 weeks of the year.

Just under half of the children come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds and speak first languages other than English. The main other home languages are Urdu and Polish. About a quarter of the children are at an early stage of speaking English. A small number of children have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The main areas of need are speech, language and communication, emotional and behavioural difficulties and autism.

The Slade Nursery School is part of several different partnerships. Since 2007 the governors have managed the Slade and Headington Children's Centre which is led by the headteacher and provides a range of extended services to young children and their families. The whole of the site, which encompasses primary school, nursery school and children's centre, youth and community centres, is currently being rebuilt into an integrated schools and community facility.

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

This is a good Nursery and Children's Centre. It has several outstanding features. Adults provide a stimulating learning environment and consequently all children make good progress from their many and varied starting points. The good practice identified at the previous inspection has been improved further as the centre has developed and expanded the services it provides. One of the main reasons for this sustained improvement is the inspired leadership and drive of the headteacher. Together with all the staff, she cares deeply about the education and development of all the children and is constantly looking for ways to improve even further. Induction procedures are sensitively and thoughtfully carried out which ensures every child settles quickly and happily and develops good attitudes to working and playing. Behaviour is excellent and learning takes place in a happy and harmonious atmosphere. A key feature of this setting is the exemplary care it offers, not just to children but also to their families. Safeguarding procedures are robust and ensure all children are safe and secure. Staff work extremely closely with parents and carers and a range of outside agencies to ensure that all children achieve well in all the areas of learning.

Teaching is good and all staff are totally committed to improving their expertise through training. A new method of tracking children's progress has been introduced and staff use this information to plan effectively children's future learning throughout both the day and maintained nurseries. The way staff interact with children to extend their language, learning and play varies and is an area for improvement. The wealth of activities offered to the children in both nurseries succeeds in stimulating their curiosity and extending their learning. Children love the frequent visits to interesting places like the bluebell woods and exciting events such as maypole dancing and hatching ducklings. Many visitors bring art or animals to the setting which enrich the children's learning and give them a sense of wonder about the world. Children are encouraged to make decisions about what they are going to learn which enables them to grow in confidence. All groups of children thoroughly enjoy their learning and achieve well.

The development of the school and the expansion of the centre and the extended services have necessitated many changes in the way the centre is organised. These changes have been managed with considerable skill and empathy by the headteacher. Everyone is looking forward to their new building and morale is high because there is a great emphasis on teamwork. Children's best interests are central to any decisions taken and hence there is a good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise the quality of teaching even further, to make much of it outstanding, by making sure that all adults seize every opportunity to engage and interact with the children to extend their language, learning and play.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children**2**

Children love coming to the nurseries and enjoy every minute they are there. 'I struggle to get her to stay off when she's ill,' wrote one parent. There is a highly appropriate emphasis on developing children's social skills when they first start so that all children are ready to learn. Staff are very skilled at knowing how much support each child needs to take them forward. For instance, children swinging on the monkey bars are gently supported for a few times before they eventually complete the task unaided. Because the needs of every child are so well known by their 'Key Person', all achieve well. By the time they leave, children from all backgrounds have made good progress from their starting points which, in many cases, are below those typical of three-year-olds. Most children attain the expected levels for their age on entry to their Reception classes. Bilingual staff ensure those children at an early stage of learning English are supported at all times with a good range of high quality resources and practical activities to aid new learning. Sensitive, loving support for those children with complex behavioural and learning needs ensures they also make good progress. Mealtimes for children who stay all day are used well to stimulate learning as well as social skills because adults gently encourage the children to discuss their food preferences, instead of just reaching for what they want.

Children feel safe because the environment both inside and outside is well protected and there is always a trusted, smiling adult to turn to if they have any worries. They love all the many chances to be healthy, such as choosing healthy foods at snack time and developing physical skills by climbing, running and digging in the garden. In this safe, supportive environment, children quickly develop good personal skills. Babies and toddlers in the day care setting are in family groups so they have great fun and quickly become independent when working and playing alongside older children. There are many chances for them to rest in the sleep room or engage in quieter play and their all important 'Key Person' is never far away for reassurance and cuddles. Children from all backgrounds play well together, behave exceptionally well and take turns and share nicely. Older children happily support younger ones in their learning and play. They develop good spiritual, moral, social and cultural qualities as staff celebrate various customs and festivals. These events promote children's self esteem and pride in their own backgrounds. Although attendance is not statutory the centre does everything it possibly can to encourage parents and carers to bring their children regularly. The wide range of basic skills the children learn, together with their good personal and social development, means they are well prepared for their Reception classes.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

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

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	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	2
Taking into account:	
Children's attendance ¹	3
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

A wide range of exciting and inviting activities interest and motivate the children to investigate and explore both indoors and outdoors. The excellent relationships and partnerships the centre has established in the local area enables children to experience, for example, regular visits to a Forest School. A myriad of exciting activities is planned for children to enjoy. These include planting seeds in the attractive outdoor area, practising maypole dancing, making jam tarts, caring for George the duckling and Brian and Bob the guinea pigs and selling flowers in Fred's Flower Shop. Children with specific difficulties are sensitively supported by a highly competent adult who ensures they benefit from quiet sessions away from the bustle and noise as well as working alongside other children when appropriate. Staff observe children carefully and record their development diligently. This occurs across all areas of learning so their records are comprehensive. Some staff are more skilled than others at using assessment information to ensure their conversations and interactions move children's learning and development further. The quality of care, guidance and support is exceptionally high. The welfare needs of all children are met extremely well. Induction arrangements into both the day care and the maintained nurseries are of a high quality. Adults excel at ensuring children and parents and carers feel welcomed, loved and valued at all times. One parent writes, 'I love my child's key person as I think she's the kind of human who really enjoys her job and gives her heart into what she's doing.'

¹ 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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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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher works tirelessly to promote high standards and strives for excellence at all times. Her vision for the future of the centre is shared by all the staff and governors. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection in terms of provision and development of staff expertise. This is testament to the commitment and dedication of all to further improvement. Governors and staff are rigorous in ensuring that children are safe and secure and all statutory requirements regarding safeguarding and child protection are met. Governors are extremely supportive and are fully involved in decision making and increasingly monitoring the centre's work. There are equal opportunities for every child and there is no discrimination. As a result all children achieve equally well. The centre has excellent relationships with parents and the local community and works very hard to break down any potential barriers. Effective outreach services, such as regular mother and toddler meetings, mean that the parent/centre partnerships are established from the time the children are born. There is a clear understanding of community cohesion and staff ensure children learn about other children's faiths and cultures. Staff have good plans in hand to provide links with children in other parts of the world.

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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1

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	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
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

A good number of the parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire. All of these parents and carers feel that the centre is led and managed effectively and that their children are kept very safe. All parents and carers are happy with their children's experiences. A very small number of parents raised concerns but there were no issues which were relevant to the centre as a whole. Parents' individual concerns were summarised and reported to the headteacher without identifying any individual. Inspectors agree wholeheartedly with the parents' and carers' very positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at The Slade Nursery and Children's 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 81 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	76	12	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	72	14	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	70	15	30	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	54	22	44	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	52	23	46	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	50	24	48	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	48	24	48	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)	24	48	23	46	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	46	26	52	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	42	26	52	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	48	24	48	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	29	58	21	42	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	74	13	26	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 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	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



30 April 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of The Slade Nursery and Children's Centre, Oxford OX3 8QQ

We really enjoyed visiting you and I am writing to thank you for two very happy days. I particularly enjoying seeing how much fun you all have and meeting George the duckling.

These are the things we found out.

- Your behaviour is excellent and you work and play very happily together.
- You are taught well and your activities are fun and interesting.
- Your headteacher is a brilliant leader and together with the staff makes sure you learn a lot of new things.
- You are given many exciting things to do and have lots of visitors. You love all the chances you are given for digging, cooking, painting, sticking and running. You also love the songs and stories the adults teach you.
- You do a great deal for yourselves by making good choices about what you want to learn. You do a lot for other people too, by tidying up.
- The adults keep you very safe and you learn to eat healthily and enjoy playing outside and are very good at going along the monkey bars.
- Your parents and carers love your centre as much as you do because it helps your whole family as well as you.

We have asked the adults to work and talk to you all the time so that you learn even more. You can help by always being kind and by behaving well as you do now.

We wish you and your families all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joyce Cox

Lead inspector

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