



Inspection report

# Pastures Way Nursery School

Unique Reference Number 109423  
LEA Luton

Inspection number 243736  
Inspection dates 7 - 8 October 2004  
Reporting inspector Jane Wotherspoon HMI

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the school Inspectors Act 1996, and was deemed section 12(3) under the same act.

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Type of School	Nursery School	School address	Pastures Way
School category	Maintained		Bedfordshire
Age range of pupils	3 - 5		Luton
			LU4 0PE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01582 600691
Number on roll	135	Fax number	01582 600691
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr John Heredia
Date of previous inspection	May 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Kate Smith

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<b>Age group</b> 3 - 5	<b>Published</b> November 2004	<b>Reference no.</b> 243736
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## Introduction

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in its consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of the staff of Pastures Way Nursery School and of the local education authority. At the same time, a Children Act Part X A inspection to the National Standards for Day Care and Childminding was carried out. A copy of this report is attached.

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and a childcare inspector.

### **Description of the school**

Pastures Way Nursery School serves an area on the western side of Luton where many families have low incomes. It is larger than many nurseries. In January 2004 it gained Early Excellence Centre status and receives extra funding to provide additional services for local families and the wider community. These include childcare and education for children aged between six months and five years old. The building has been extended to accommodate the increase in the number of children on roll. Eight children with severe and complex special needs are full members of the school. Five children have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Almost half the children are from ethnic minority families and 13 per cent are in the early stages of learning English. Many children start nursery at the age of three with skills that are below the levels expected.

### **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

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## Overall effectiveness of the school

Pastures Way is an effective school with many strengths that gives good value for money. Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation of its overall effectiveness. The quality of education, including teaching, is good. As a result, the children make good progress particularly in personal, social and emotional development. Children's attitudes and behaviour are very good. They are very enthusiastic about all the interesting things they do at school. Parents say they can't wait to come to school. Adults provide a high level of care and support for the children in this calm, purposeful environment where each individual is valued. Because of the headteacher's very good leadership, the school has successfully expanded the services it offers to children, their parents and the wider community. The changes have been managed effectively and efficiently.

**Grade: 2**

### Improvement since the last inspection

The school has changed significantly since the last inspection in 2000. It has not been inspected before as an Early Excellence Centre. The previous inspection issues have been tackled effectively and the strengths in children's achievement and in teaching have been maintained despite all the changes that have taken place.

**Grade: 2**

### Capacity to improve

The school has a good capacity to continue its efforts to improve and is well-placed to build on its success so far. The self-evaluation form gives an accurate assessment of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The school knows itself well and knows what it needs to do to improve.

**Grade: 2**

### What the school should do to improve further

The school has put in place systems to tackle the following relative weaknesses. Inspectors agree that they should:

- use assessment information more effectively when planning so that there is a clear focus on what different groups of children are expected to learn
- plan more opportunities for mathematical development.

## Achievement and standards

Children achieve well at Pastures Way. They make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development and this helps them to make good progress in other areas of learning. The school has rightly identified that children do not always make as much progress in mathematical development as they do in other areas. All children learn some simple sign language at group times and this gives them alternative ways to communicate. This is particularly helpful for children with special educational needs and for those who start school speaking little English. The latter soon gain confidence and learn new words. Children with severe and complex special needs make very good progress in taking the small steps that are set for them.

Story sessions are a strong feature of the daily routine. Children listen very well and love books. They like hearing the same story again and again and join in with familiar parts. In a game based on a story about ten animals in a bed, the children were entranced as a cut-out shape of each animal was gradually revealed from behind a screen. They have fun exploring and investigating all the interesting things in the nursery. For example, a small group of children were fascinated by what was inside a telephone when they took it apart and another group were both delighted and spellbound by the colours on the flashing torches in the sensory room. Progress in physical development is good as the children have plenty of chance to go outside to climb and run in the fresh air, and are developing their co-ordination skills. They are adept at steering large wheeled toys around the spacious playground; a boy collecting house bricks from the shed persevered with manoeuvring his wheelbarrow in a very confined space. Many handle small objects carefully, such as a girl who placed tiny sequins with great precision onto her collage; others demonstrate good control by using tools such as hammers, scissors and screwdrivers safely. They enjoy listening to a range of music and using traditional instruments and objects to make music.

The children's behaviour is exceptionally good. Children who start school unable to share resources and work with others soon learn to co-operate. This is because of the sensitive way that staff lead them to do the right things and because of the good example set by the older children. A child, unable to have a toy tractor that was already being driven around the outdoor area, was asked what he would do; he replied that he would wait. The children are enthusiastic about coming to school: they bounce in! Concentration levels are high for their age and older children sustain interest in activities for a long time. They are independent, use their initiative to choose what they want to do, and approach visitors confidently. Strong foundations for the children's very good attitudes to learning are laid in the school's extended provision for childcare. Those who have attended such sessions adapt easily to nursery routines and settle very quickly. The children support each other and show respect both for equipment and for one another. They willingly take responsibility for small duties such as tidying up and making their own healthy snacks.

### **Grade: 2**

## Quality of provision

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that teaching is good. Some elements are very good. A significant strength in teaching is the consistency of approach used by staff. Daily routines are firmly established and expectations of children are clear. Very effective behaviour management is unobtrusive, but firm when necessary. This ensures that children learn in a purposeful environment. Each area is organised very effectively with activities and materials set out to encourage the children to be independent in what they choose. Adults use the excellent resources, including computers, imaginatively to stimulate learning and to give the children new challenges.

Adults are conscientious in making regular and detailed observations of what the children know and can do. In the past, there was too little focus on mathematical development in adults' observations. This shortcoming is being remedied. Staff have introduced a new system for assessing children when they start school so that they have a more accurate picture of the children's progress across all areas of learning. However, staff do not always use the information from their observations as much as they could when planning daily activities. This means that plans for those activities that children choose do not make clear enough what different groups of children are expected to learn. In practice, adults instinctively challenge children in different ways by adapting activities and asking questions with different levels of difficulty. Such questions make children think but, importantly, the adults give them time to answer. Planning for story sessions is good; each session builds systematically on what was learnt the day before.

A very broad and stimulating range of activities, both inside and outdoors, is on offer to children. However, because staff do not track formally what children choose they cannot guarantee that children experience all areas of learning regularly. More links could be made between areas of learning. This is particularly so in mathematical development which could be planned more frequently, both as a focused activity and as part of activities that children choose.

A very good level of care and support for children is underpinned by excellent relationships. Each child and their family are well-known. This knowledge begins with the visits made to children's homes as part of the excellent systems for helping children to settle into the nursery. Children's social skills are developed very effectively through paired and group work. The learning mentor, funded through the Education Action Zone, gives sensitive support to children who have low self-esteem, and she also gives guidance and advice to parents on a range of concerns, including managing children's behaviour. Parents are appreciative of this help. Child protection procedures are familiar to all staff and systems for ensuring children's health and safety are secure. The school promotes healthy eating with careful attention to what is provided at snack times, which is an outstanding feature. The special educational needs of children are assessed very thoroughly so that they can get the right level of support. The school draws very successfully on the specialist advice of local agencies and support services.

**Grade: 2**

## Leadership and management

Overall, leadership and management are good. The headteacher has been the driving force behind the significant changes that have taken place in the school. Through her very good leadership, the vision of the school as an Early Excellence Centre with extended services for children, their families and the wider community, has been realised. She is supported effectively by senior staff and the governing body. All staff reflect critically on what they do and seek to improve their practice. They have a strong commitment to doing the best they can for the children so that each has the opportunity to succeed. Although many staff are new to the school, the team work is strong. This is because there are robust procedures for inducting staff into their roles, and very good opportunities for professional development.

The management of the school is good. Self-evaluation systems enable senior staff to identify what needs to improve. Examples are the current focus on mathematical development, and the recent introduction of systems for tracking the progress of groups of children. The school improvement plan contains a comprehensive list of improvements that are prioritised clearly. Each priority has appropriate actions and a governor monitors developments. Governors have a clear role in checking and evaluating the school's work and are knowledgeable about its strengths and areas for improvement.

**Grade: 2**

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Office for Standards  
in Education

## DAY CARE INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY280683/A2/IST/SJR

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 06/10/2004  
Inspector Name Maureen Roberts

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care  
Out of School Day Care  
Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name Pastures Way Nursery School  
Setting Address Pastures Way  
Luton  
Bedfordshire  
LU4 0PE

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Pastures Way Nursery School

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Pastures Way Nursery School



## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care. When making judgements, inspectors have regard to how well the provider meets the National Standards for under Eights Day Care and Childminding. A list of these is attached. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement.

This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

### Information about the setting

Pasture's Way Nursery School was registered in January 2004. It is a neighbourhood nursery and Excellence Centre which operates from purpose built premises providing care during an extended day.

The Nursery is registered for 117 children aged 0-5 years of whom only 21 may be under 3 years of age. This includes funded three and four year olds. The Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative and the Early Excellence Centre programme contribute to the funding. No overnight care is provided.

The Nursery is open to children who have particular needs, their siblings and those who have requested a place. Children can attend for a variety of sessions. The setting can support children with special needs or those who have English as an additional language.

The group is open Monday to Friday for 48 weeks a year. The provision is open from 08.00 to 18.00 daily.

The majority of staff are qualified and child care ratios will be maintained at all times.

### How good is the Day Care?

Pasture's Way Nursery Centre provides good care for children. The centre is bright and attractive with an excellent range of carefully selected resources for all groups including those that stimulate babies. Especially good use is made of the outdoor space with a 'jungle' garden and willow igloos used for play. The centre is well organised and staff are deployed effectively. The organisational plan is clear but lags behind developments for extended care. The premises are cleaned to a high standard. Staff are well qualified and experienced.

Good procedures ensure health and safety at all times. Governors take a proactive interest. Staff promote good health and minimise the risk of infection. Security is good. The space is very well arranged, although the position of the toilets for the toddlers is not ideal. The range of food provided is impressive, with items carefully selected to promote healthy eating and good nutrition. Dietary needs are carefully met. There is an effective policy on

equal opportunities and all staff implement it well. Everyone is included and children with complex special needs are well integrated and cared for in all groups. An effective child protection policy works well in practice.

A range of stimulating and varied activities is provided throughout the day in all rooms. Staff build well on children's interests. Adults skilfully engage children in activities, but also allow them time to pursue their own interests. The youngest children form good attachments and are cared for in a gentle manner. Behaviour is well managed. Staff have consistent expectations and use praise and encouragement to good effect. There is a strong partnership with parents who are fully involved in settling their children. The home visiting programme is an impressive feature. Parents' questionnaires show a high level of satisfaction. Information on children's activities and physical needs is appropriately shared.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Not applicable

#### **What is being done well?**

- Activities encourage play and development very effectively as staff plan and adjust what is on offer to match children's developing interests. Language development and social skills are especially well supported. The provision in the before school time settles everyone well for the day.
- Special educational needs are well understood and children are effectively supported and integrated.
- Equal opportunities are well promoted through a good range of resources; encouragement is available to all children for the planned activities; spontaneous activities; and those involving the exploration of the exciting outdoor area.
- Resources have been very carefully selected and are of a very high standard. For example, babies enjoy mirrored walls and furry steps, and the outdoor sand area is spacious and inviting. Small wooden furniture supports independence from an early age.

#### **An aspect of outstanding practice:**

The promotion of healthy eating habits is excellent. The wide variety of fruit and vegetables encourages children to explore their tastes and preferences. Staff liaise well with the health authority and plan and evaluate thoughtfully what they provide for all meals and snacks throughout the day. The centre has won external awards for this aspect of care. Children enjoy happy social eating times with staff fully involved in discussing new tastes and the children's responses as well as the days events (Standard 8).

**What needs to be improved?**

- The organisational plan to ensure it keeps pace with the changes in the provision.

**Outcome of the inspection**

Good

**CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION**

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

**WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?****The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
2	Ensure the operational plan is updated to keep pace with the rapid changes in the provision

## **SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON**

*Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.*

### **STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION**

*The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.*

### **STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY**

*The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.*

### **STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

*The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.*

### **STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT**

*Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.*

### **STANDARD 6 - SAFETY**

*The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.*

### **STANDARD 7 - HEALTH**

*The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.*

### **STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK**

*Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.*

## **STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

*The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.*

## **STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)**

*The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.*

## **STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR**

*Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.*

## **STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

*The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.*

## **STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION**

*The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.*

## **STANDARD 14: DOCUMENTATION**

*Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.*