



# Shenley Fields Nursery School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 103142  
**LEA** Birmingham  
**Inspection number** 276858  
**Inspection dates** 20 June 2006 to 20 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mike Capper AI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery	<b>School address</b>	Farwood Road
<b>School category</b>	Maintained		Birmingham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 4		West Midlands B31 1BS
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4753065
<b>Number on roll</b>	61	<b>Fax number</b>	0121 476 3051
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	2 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Jackie White

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 4	<b>Inspection dates</b> 20 June 2006 - 20 June 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 276858
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This Nursery takes most of its children from the local community. All children attend the school full time for one year. The numbers claiming free school meals is high, as is the proportion with learning difficulties. Attainment on starting school is below the expected levels for children of this age.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school where children achieve well and learning is made fun. It is a very happy place where children blossom. They feel secure because of the outstanding support, care and guidance they receive. Children behave well and have very positive attitudes towards learning. Good quality teaching helps children to make good progress from their starting points. By the time they leave school most children are on target to meet the expected levels for the end of the Reception Year in primary school. Children make the best progress in personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. In mathematical development, children's progress is not as rapid. This is because opportunities are not always grasped to support children's learning as consistently as in other areas. Nevertheless, there is a good curriculum, which builds on children's interests well. Adults have very good relationships with the children and support them especially well when working with them during independent activities. However, the pace of learning sometimes slows during group discussions at the end of lessons because children are tired and adults do not always concentrate enough on finding out what has been achieved. The school is well led and managed and has improved rapidly over the last three years after a period of significant instability. Senior managers are passionate about the school and they are committed to ensuring that all children do their best. There are good systems for checking how well the school is doing, though senior managers evaluate overall effectiveness more modestly than the inspectors. The headteacher has established outstanding links with parents and they are rightly very pleased with the school. They particularly like the way that they are encouraged to be involved in their children's education. Weaknesses from the last inspection have been dealt with and the school is in a good position to improve further. The school provides good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve progress in mathematical development by ensuring that it has a higher profile in everyday work.
- Make better use of group discussions at the end of sessions to consolidate and extend children's learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are broadly average. By the time they leave school, most children are well on the way towards meeting the goals they are expected to reach by the end of their first year in primary school.

Children make good progress in most areas of learning. They do particularly well in personal, social and emotional development because they are encouraged to be independent and to take responsibility for themselves as soon as they start school. In communication, language and literacy, children's basic skills improve quickly. Children are keen to write and many are already forming letters and attempting to write simple

words and sentences. They speak confidently to visitors and use a good vocabulary when describing things. Children make satisfactory progress in mathematical development. Progress is slower in this area of learning than others, because adults sometimes miss opportunities to extend skills.

Whilst the school does not set particular targets for children it has very high expectations of what children can achieve and works extremely hard to ensure all children reach their potential. Children with learning difficulties are supported well and make good progress. Specialist support has a good effect on their speaking and listening skills.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Children's personal development and well-being are good. Children show outstanding enjoyment by concentrating enthusiastically on the wide range of exciting activities. Good and improving attendance reflects this very keen interest and the very good attitudes towards learning. The good role models provided by members of staff help the children to settle quickly in the mornings, behave well and to form good relationships with others. As a result, children develop good self-esteem and are confident and independent when making choices. However, they sometimes lose concentration during group times at the end of lessons, especially when teaching does not hold their attention. This slows the pace of learning.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children work sensibly with or without adult support and carefully follow school rules. Most are kind to each other and feel safe at school. They understand that they can improve their health by eating healthy foods such as fresh fruit, milkshake and vegetables. Children learn good manners during lunch and share resources amicably. Children make a good contribution towards the wider community. For example, they take part in a drama festival with other schools and take responsibility for watering the plants in the 'green house'. They make good progress in developing skills that prepare them well for later life. For example, during role play, they learn how to buy a ticket for a bus ride.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good because members of staff understand the needs of young children and engage their interest well by supporting them in activities that they have chosen for themselves. Members of staff are skilled in asking questions that develop the children's curiosity and expand their vocabularies. Children are encouraged to be active in their learning through practical and relevant activities and this contributes well to the way their behaviour is managed successfully. Good use is made of the specific skills of teachers and teaching assistants to promote good learning in music and physical development.

The pace of learning is good during independent activities but it sometimes slows when children are working in 'review' groups at the end of sessions. This is because adults do not always make good use of this time to consolidate and extend learning. Nevertheless, at other times, the checking of children's learning is very thorough.

Assessment information is used well to guide children's learning and plan the next steps. Teachers and teaching assistants make good use of 'memory books' to record important landmarks in the children's learning. These are greatly appreciated by parents.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

There is a good curriculum that meets children's differing interests and capabilities well. Members of staff work together closely to plan in detail activities that follow on from the children's interests from the previous week. A good range of enrichment activities, visits and visitors provides variety and specialist support. For example, a successful project has been run by a musician and the 'top start' scheme has had a good effect on children's physical development.

Creativity is promoted well through interesting role play activities such as the 'artificial beach' with 'changing hut'. Literacy skills are promoted well throughout the school day, but mathematical development has a lower profile and progress is slower in this area of learning.

Whilst the school monitors the choices that children make, this is largely informal and there are some occasions when children are not aware of all the activities that are available, or spend too long on one task without developing their learning enough. The curriculum includes good opportunities for health and safety issues to be discussed, such as the safe handling of food and the need to protect the skin from the sun.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. Members of staff monitor the children's academic and personal development very carefully. They meet weekly to discuss children's progress and they use this information well to plan for the next stage of learning. Recent improvements in supporting children with learning difficulties are having a good impact on learning.

Excellent links are made with parents and external agencies such as the health visitor and a speech and language support teacher to involve children fully in their learning and to safeguard their well-being. Child protection procedures are fully in place. Members of staff are conscientious in ensuring that children are kept safe, healthy and happy. Breakfast club helps children to make a good start to the day and is a sociable occasion. There are good procedures for supporting children when they first start school, and as a result, children gain confidence and learn routines very quickly.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and have created an environment in which children thrive and make good progress. The very well respected headteacher provides very strong leadership for the school, and has been instrumental in the fast rate of improvement over the last three years after a period of significant turbulence, including the danger of school closure. She is well supported by a very able deputy headteacher. Together they have brought stability and a strong sense of teamwork to the school. There have been good training opportunities for all members of staff. These have increased their confidence and have helped to establish a shared sense of purpose, with every child being seen as equally important.

There are good procedures for checking how well the school is doing. This means that senior managers have an accurate understanding of the school's main strengths and weaknesses, though their evaluation of overall effectiveness is slightly more modest than that of the inspectors. The monitoring of teaching is thorough. Senior managers have accurately identified the need to iron out the remaining minor inconsistencies in teaching. Governance is good. Governors provide good challenge to senior managers and support the school well, for example by taking responsibility for the development of the outdoor area. The school has effectively dealt with the weaknesses from the last inspection and is moving forward quickly. There is a good capacity for further improvement.

The views of all members of the community are welcomed and parents speak very positively of the way that the school helps them to support their children through activities such as the 'early start' project. Parents are rightly delighted with the school. For example, one wrote that 'the school has changed into an incredible centre for learning, allowing the children to develop their own ideas and hopefully producing a new Da Vinci or Einstein of the future'.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I have asked Mrs White to read this to you.

I expect you saw us in your school recently. We really enjoyed visiting you. Thank you for talking to us and showing us what you were doing.

I would like to tell you what we liked best. We thought you were all very good children and you all played very nicely together. We liked the way that you helped each other and shared things. You have some lovely toys to play with to help you learn. All the grown-ups look after you very well and help you to learn about new things quickly. If you find something hard to do there are lots of grown-ups who will help you. Mrs White and all the other grown-ups make sure that your school is a lovely place to be.

I have asked Mrs White to make your school even better by helping you to learn more about numbers and shapes. I have also asked her to try to make sure that the group times at the end of lessons are used more to help you learn new things.

We hope you carry on enjoying your time in the school and do well in your next school.