



Oxhill Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113970
LEA Durham
Inspection number 279285
Inspection dates 5 December 2005 to 6 December 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Gianna Ulyatt

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Oxhill
School category	Community		Stanley
Age range of pupils	3 to 4		County Durham, DH9 7LR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01207 232266
Number on roll	132	Fax number	
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Kevin Meredith
Date of previous inspection	1 July 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Pearl Robinson

Age group 3 to 4	Inspection dates 5 December 2005 - 6 December 2005	Inspection number 279285
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

Oxhill Nursery School is situated in Stanley, County Durham and provides part-time education for children aged from three to four years. There are currently 182 children on role. Children have a broad range of experiences, but overall many come from areas of social deprivation. The nursery is a designated Special Educational Needs Outreach Centre. No children are from minority ethnic background and no children speak English as a second language. The school offers some extended services.

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 and this judgement matches the school's own assessment of its effectiveness. Children, including those with learning difficulties, achieve well and make good progress in the calm, caring, but busy, atmosphere. The majority of children are almost on target to reach the standards expected for their age in all areas of learning, apart from aspects of literacy. There are plenty of interesting things to do in the bright and stimulating environment. However, opportunities are missed for children to learn through a range of activities outdoors. Children's behaviour and personal development are outstanding. All enjoy learning and parents say they don't want to come home! Teaching is good and support staff make a very positive contribution to learning. Children are very well looked after by caring adults in an environment where their achievements are valued and celebrated. Staff observe children and know them well, but do not make enough use of this information to plan harder work in aspects of mathematics and literacy for those who are able to tackle it. The headteacher leads the school well, knows its strengths and what needs to be done next. She has made significant improvements since the last inspection and therefore the school has the capacity to improve further. Monitoring procedures are becoming established and the school is now operating as a team. The school gives good value for money.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that there is planned provision for the outdoor curriculum throughout the year and that all six areas of learning are covered.
- Improve the quality and use of on-going assessment to ensure that work for children of above average ability stretches them in terms of understanding how numbers work and recognising letters and familiar words.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and progress are good. Some children start the nursery with well-developed skills but the majority have skills well below those expected for their age particularly in personal, social and emotional development, speaking and listening and mathematical understanding. The nursery quickly addresses social development and speaking and listening skills so children work harmoniously together and become good learners. The school's assessment information shows that the majority are almost on target to reach the standards expected for their age in all six areas of learning. The exception is in aspects of literacy. This is because opportunities for learning letter sounds and familiar words are not planned often enough. Those who have learning difficulties also make good progress. Their needs are quickly identified and addressed because of the high commitment the nursery has.

Children develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in all six areas of learning. They are curious about the world around them. They show pleasure and confidence when dancing and playing instruments. They make good progress in their physical development. They enjoy the exercise and fresh air.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

This aspect is outstanding, which is better than the school's judgement. This is because the school places very high priority on ensuring all children quickly acquire the necessary skills to be confident learners. Children frequently radiate their enjoyment in music sessions, for example. They readily share resources and take turns willingly. Behaviour is exemplary and children are friendly and confident. Children enjoy exercise during indoor dance sessions and when using wheeled vehicles outdoors. They know that it is important to eat fruit and drink milk and water. Children demonstrate high levels of concentration. They discuss their paintings with pride and work hard to complete their tasks. Children relate very well to each other and to adults and these skills prepare them well for life long learning.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. In particular, children learn to give thought to the needs of others less fortunate than themselves when they participate in charitable events. Attendance is satisfactory. Parents confirm that children want to come to school and express regret when the weekend arrives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and support staff make a very valuable contribution. Adult-led activities are planned with much thought and discussion. Staff know what they want children to learn. They challenge children encouraging them to develop their imagination. In small groups staff interact sensitively and explain clearly, adjusting the challenge according to the age group. Adults have a consistent approach in developing children's independence. They establish clear routines and expectations and so behaviour is outstanding. Planning is detailed; however there is some inconsistency in the way plans are produced. Therefore children are not always clear about what they have achieved in self-chosen activities. Staff observe children and know what they can do. Their observations build up a picture of each child's progress. However, there is some inconsistency in the way staff use the information. Therefore activities relating to understanding numbers, and recognising letters and words do not always stretch children of above average ability.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school judges the curriculum to be good, whilst the inspection team judges it to be satisfactory. The indoor curriculum includes a good range of interesting activities in all six areas of learning, which stimulate children and enable them to make good progress. Despite these strengths, outdoor provision is not planned with sufficient depth. Although physical development is planned outdoors, the other areas of learning are not included throughout the year. The school acknowledges this gap in provision. Considerable attention is given to children's personal and social development and to health and safety. Consequently children achieve well. Plans rotate every two years to take account of children spending up to five terms in the nursery. The curriculum is enriched well with outings and interesting visitors. A musician recently worked in school and so enthused the children that parents said they often talk about playing African drums. The curriculum prepares children well for the reception class.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This aspect is outstanding whereas the school judges it to be good. The school has high quality procedures to ensure that children and staff are safe. Staff are vigilant when children use scissors and other tools. Children's concerns are taken seriously. Their views are sought and their opinions valued. Consequently they quickly develop the confidence to ask for help when they need it. Good child protection systems are in place and all staff have undertaken training, for example in First Aid. The school places high priority on identifying early any areas of concern within children's learning. The school then ensures that children with learning difficulties receive the necessary support to enable them to achieve the standard of which they are capable. Parents of children who have speech and language difficulties confirm this. Children know how well they are doing because adults praise their successes and encourage them further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, who is well supported by the governing body, has a clear vision for the nursery. The strategic plan is underpinned by her clear commitment to meeting the needs of all children in this inclusive school. Links with parents are strong, as are the links with external agencies. The headteacher has done much to improve the school since the last inspection and this is evident in the improvements to the school building and the way the outdoor area is resourced. Significant changes to the responsibilities of key members of staff are beginning to have a positive impact on provision. The school is aware that there is still much to do but has set out a clear programme for staff development. The school has good capacity to improve. The headteacher is beginning to use achievement data to evaluate the nursery's effectiveness and to identify areas for improvement. The annual school improvement plan contains a good range of priorities with appropriate actions. The

governing body contributes well and systematically to the leadership and management of the nursery since being constituted two years ago. Financial systems for managing the newly delegated budget are appropriate. Resources are managed efficiently.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	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

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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

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Oxhill Nursery School
Oxhill
Stanley
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DH9 7LR

6 December 2005

Dear Children

We really enjoyed our visit to your school. Every room looked beautiful because your work was displayed so nicely. It was a delight to come across so many friendly and helpful children. We really enjoyed talking with you about your paintings and the presents you were making for baby Jesus.

We know you are well cared for in school because all the adults talk about you with real fondness. We like the way you listen well when stories are read and the way you follow instructions when learning to use scissors and glue. It was a pleasure to see you acting out many parts in the different role-play scenes. Some of you were dragons and others were angels or Mary or Joseph. You are learning many new words as you play. We like the way you dance and move to music. It was fun to watch you. We like the way you concentrate when adults are explaining things to you. That's a very clever way to be. We especially like the way you are kind to your friends and the way you take turns. Your behaviour is fantastic!

You have been learning many new things in the nursery. You have been working very hard to learn how to make Christmas decorations and cards to take home. You have lots of wonderful activities to do each day. We know you like to play outside and we have asked the adults to think of more, but different activities for you to do there.

We can see how well adults know you and care for you. We have asked them to think of some harder jobs for you to do. This is because some of you are ready to learn more exciting things about numbers. Some of you are also ready to learn more about letters of the alphabet and words you use a lot. We hope you will try even harder and listen even better when learning these new and exciting things.

With very best wishes

Gianna Ulyatt (Lead inspector) and Arthur Allison (Additional Inspector)

Annex B

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