



Chichester Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125808
LEA West Sussex
Inspection number 282003
Inspection dates 4 July 2006 to 4 July 2006
Reporting inspector Carole Skinner AI

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	St James Road
School category	Maintained		Chichester
Age range of pupils	3 to 4		West Sussex PO19 7AB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01243 782540
Number on roll	119	Fax number	01243 782540
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	29 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Candy Daffern

Age group 3 to 4	Inspection dates 4 July 2006 - 4 July 2006	Inspection number 282003
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Chichester Nursery School is one of four local authority maintained nursery schools in West Sussex. It is situated in a part of the city that has significant pockets of social deprivation. The majority of children are White British. Around 10% come from minority ethnic backgrounds and about half of these children are learning to speak English for the first time. Since April 2005, the school has also offered fully integrated child care provision for children from the age of six months. Part-time nursery education is offered in both morning and afternoon sessions to children aged three and four years. There is a high proportion of children with learning difficulties and statements of special educational need.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school which gives children the very best start to their education. Parents write in glowing terms of 'a brilliant school' which gives their children 'a fabulous start' and the children clearly love every minute of their time there. The school's own view of its effectiveness is somewhat more conservative because leaders can still see huge challenges ahead as the school evolves into a fully integrated children's centre. The outstanding facilities it offers and the exceptionally good quality of teaching and learning ensure that it gives excellent value for money.

The exciting and creative curriculum provides children with a wealth of wonderful experiences which help them to make exceptionally good progress in all areas of learning. By the time children leave the nursery, standards are high compared to the low starting point of many. Children's personal development is outstanding because all of the adults nurture their curiosity and sense of wonder. Children thrive on the excellent care and support which help to build their self-esteem and independence.

Excellent teamwork between all practitioners makes for consistency and shared expectations of high achievement. Dynamic leadership and management are driving the school onward and upward as it pioneers the integration of full-time care and nursery education. Subject leaders play an effective part in evaluating and assuring the quality of the curriculum, but they are still developing their role in monitoring teaching through observation and analysing assessment data. The school has already made great strides since its last inspection and is developing a ground-breaking approach to nursery provision. It is very well placed to provide a future model of good practice for others to follow.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the role of subject leaders in monitoring teaching and learning and analysing assessment data.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding. Children make exceptionally good progress during their time at the nursery in all areas of learning because of the richness and variety of experiences provided for them. Standards on entry to the school are below average, especially in language and communication skills. By the time they leave, all children are on course to reach the standards expected by the end of the reception year, and many exceed the expectations for their age. Children learn to communicate clearly and confidently because they are constantly engaged in conversation and introduced to new vocabulary. They quickly develop early literacy and counting skills and become proficient in using technology. Their knowledge of the world around them increases daily and their physical skills and creative talents flourish under the expert guidance of skilled teachers, nursery nurses and assistants.

All practitioners closely track children's progress and set 'next steps' targets for them to achieve. These ensure that all children are constantly challenged to move on in their learning. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Children who are learning English for the first time make good progress because of the strong emphasis on language and communication. Children with learning difficulties achieve well because they receive well-targeted additional support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding because they are firmly at the heart of the school's philosophy for early years education. Children thoroughly enjoy school and take great delight in learning. They quickly gain an understanding of right and wrong, and their behaviour is excellent. Children learn to appreciate the wonder of the world by growing plants in their 'allotment,' watching fish swim in the aquaria and marvelling at the stained-glass windows in Chichester cathedral. They learn about the festivals of different cultures but the school is still seeking ways to extend children's awareness of Britain's multicultural society. Attendance is satisfactory, being affected mainly by absence through illness, and the school works hard to encourage parents to ensure their children attend regularly.

Children enjoy preparing and eating healthy snacks. They wash their hands before handling food and are quick to wash up their dishes and utensils afterwards. Frequent drinks of water and plenty of physical exercise boost their ability to learn. Children learn how to handle tools, ride tricycles and climb on equipment safely. They work and play together really well and form close relationships with adults and other children. Children enjoy taking responsibility for tasks around the nursery and take good care of each other. The many skills they acquire prepare them very well for primary school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Children thrive in this school because the teaching is exciting and imaginative. Very good teamwork underpins the comprehensive planning that ensures that all activities have a clear purpose. Constant free-flow between the indoor and outside areas ensures that learning is continuous and driven largely by the children's interests. Wonderful opportunities to explore the stimulating and inspiring environment ensure that children enjoy learning through investigation and discovery. Their curiosity is aroused and their imagination given free rein. All practitioners have an excellent understanding of how young children learn and they plan activities that appeal to and motivate them. The adults' warm and caring manner helps children to feel secure and happy and to make the most of every learning experience.

Ongoing assessment of children's progress is a key factor in their exceptionally good progress. Frequent observations and recording of children's achievements give teachers and nursery nurses a very clear idea of the next steps in learning for each child.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school's excellent curriculum is very carefully planned, yet has the flexibility to respond to the interests and enjoyment of the children. For example, one child's fascination with lifeboats led to a whole-school focus on the topic and a visit to the Selsey lifeboat station. One of the outstanding features is the way learning is planned around extensive 'curriculum maps' through a variety of 'workshop' activities. Although different areas of the nursery are allocated to specific aspects of learning, activities are planned in such a way that meaningful links are created across all areas of the curriculum. Specialist teaching in music, drama and dance further enriches children's learning. Many opportunities to use computers, digital cameras and microscopes introduce children to the importance of technology in everyday life. Visits to many places of interest expand children's horizons and extend their knowledge of the world around them.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care and support for children is outstanding. As one parent summed it up, 'I have no worries about leaving them as I know they are very well cared for.' The well-established routines of the school help to create an orderly community, in which children feel very safe and well cared for. The very secure site allows children to move freely from one area to another without inhibiting their learning or curtailing their sense of adventure. Excellent support for children with learning difficulties ensures their needs are fully met. Procedures for protecting vulnerable children are very comprehensive. The systems for tracking children's progress are very good, but are comparatively new and are still bedding in.

Excellent additional services, such as family learning, parent and toddler groups and a toy library, provide valuable support for children and their families. The very popular 'Dads Aloud' sessions give both children and their dads wonderful opportunities to share learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Outstanding leadership and management maintain a strong focus on promoting children's well-being while ensuring a continuing drive for high achievement. The headteacher and deputy head provide very clear strategic direction and all staff and governors share the same vision for the school and are committed to the pursuit of excellence. The school is at the cutting edge of innovative practice as it juggles the demands of sustaining high quality nursery education with those of its new and

developing role as a children's centre. Even at this early stage, the impact of the leaders' vision and pioneering spirit can be seen in the seamless transition between under-threes provision and nursery education.

The school is still honing its systems and procedures for self-evaluation and strategic planning, and these are developing well. Subject leaders contribute well to evaluating the effectiveness of provision in their curriculum areas but are not all yet fully proficient in analysing assessment data to check how well different groups of children are progressing and monitoring the quality of teaching through observation. Parents' views are sought and acted upon readily and school leaders are constantly seeking to learn from expert advice and guidance in order to improve their practice.

Governors are both very supportive of the staff and rigorous in their monitoring of how well the school is doing. They use their extensive range of expertise to good effect, particularly when challenging the headteacher about the financial implications of proposed initiatives.

Even though the headteacher has only been in post for a year, great strides have already been made, especially in improving strategic planning and tracking children's progress. The energy, enthusiasm and dedication of staff and governors place the school in a very strong position to build upon its already considerable successes.

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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?	1	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	1	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?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	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	1	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?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	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?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	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	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	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

We had such a good time when we came to visit your school that we wanted to tell you what we enjoyed most.

- We think your nursery is excellent and gives you a really good start to your education. • We like the way the nursery staff make learning such fun for you. You have so many interesting and exciting things to do every day. • We think you do really well at school because you enjoy learning so much. • You are very well behaved and are kind and helpful to each other. • We were very pleased to see you eating healthy snacks and drinking lots of water, especially in the very hot weather. • You are very good at clearing up after yourselves and helping the teachers.
- Everyone in the nursery takes really good care of you and help you to feel safe and happy.

We think your nursery school is excellent and have asked the school to carry on with their plans to get even better at checking how good teaching is in all the different subjects and to see if they can make better use of the assessments they make on your progress.

Thank you for letting us come and see you and for showing us all the lovely things you were doing.