



Kings Norton Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103129
LEA Birmingham
Inspection number 286567
Inspection dates 10 July 2006 to 10 July 2006
Reporting inspector Christine Huard AI

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Westhill Road
School category	Maintained		Kings Norton
Age range of pupils	3 to 4		Birmingham, West Midlands B38 8SY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 4583993
Number on roll	61	Fax number	0121 4583993
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	27 November 2001	Headteacher	Mrs Maureen McGillicuddy

Age group 3 to 4	Inspection dates 10 July 2006 - 10 July 2006	Inspection number 286567
----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small nursery school on the outskirts of Birmingham. There are 47 children, 35 of whom attend full time. Thirteen children attend part time in the morning and 11 in the afternoon. An average proportion of children have learning difficulties. Children enter the school in the September before they are four. Although some have poor communication skills when they first enter the school, overall, their attainment is broadly in line with that expected for their age. A new headteacher started after Easter.

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 with some outstanding features. It provides good value for money. The school's evaluation of its performance is accurate because its systems for checking effectiveness, though needing some improvement, are generally very reliable. The school has the strong support of parents who say that it is friendly and welcoming, and that their children make good progress. Children love coming to school, behave well and are extremely well cared for in a safe and secure environment. The activities provided for them both indoors and out are interesting and exciting. All these elements contribute positively to children achieving well with most exceeding expectations in all areas of learning by the time they leave. Teaching is good and as a result children learn effectively and make good progress. However, children have too few opportunities to learn about different cultures and lifestyles both locally and nationally. Assessment is good and information is used carefully to track children's progress. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and she is well supported by the whole staff team and knowledgeable governors. Subject leaders are beginning to take responsibility for their areas but require further training to develop their monitoring skills. The school has made good progress and addressed all the issues from the previous inspection and has a good capacity to make further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further develop the monitoring role of subject leaders.
- Improve children's awareness of the cultural diversity in Britain today.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children achieve well. The school is careful to ensure that provision is made to build knowledge, understanding and skills across all areas of the curriculum. Children's communication skills develop well. Children are encouraged to think imaginatively and respond positively to questions, for instance, about what they would need to take to a beach party. They happily share and talk about books. They experiment in making marks as a start to their good progress in developing their writing skills. More able children write simple words correctly, for example, when writing a letter to a friend to describe the creatures they found in the school grounds. Children gain experience with numbers, counting the boats in the 'sea'. Most recognise familiar shapes and can continue or copy quite complex patterns. Knowledge and understanding of the world develops well as children learn computer skills, and go on a hunt for tiny creatures in the school grounds. Sorting pictures of rubbish helps children become aware of the importance of respecting the environment and staying healthy and safe. Children's physical skills develop and coordination improves well through using pens, pencils and scissors. They learn to climb nimbly over outdoor apparatus and wrestle with pulling on flippers at the beach party. Children build up their creative skills by working with an artist to create clay pots and experimenting with paint, printing and collage. The

needs of children with learning difficulties are quickly identified and good levels of support enable them to make good progress. Similarly, gifted and talented children are challenged through carefully planned extension tasks.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development and well-being are good. The stimulating learning environment and exciting tasks ensure children really enjoy school and behave very well indeed. This is reflected in their good attendance. Children have positive attitudes to learning. They soon learn to share and take turns because they are encouraged to do so. They are organised in groups that provide a supportive environment and where they develop confidence and belief in their own abilities. As a result, they tackle their activities with interest and enthusiasm. A small 'nurture' group for those who are more insecure effectively develops their self-esteem and concentration skills. Children's spiritual, moral and social development is good. They know the difference between right and wrong and behave extremely well in and around the school. Children are developing a good understanding of their own culture but do not have enough opportunities to improve their knowledge of the many diverse cultures around them. Through well planned activities, they learn about healthy lifestyles very effectively and how to stay safe. They discuss healthy options for their 'beach party' menu using a wide range of fruit to concoct a fruit salad. They begin to learn about their place in the wider community, through working with visitors and raising money for local charities such as the children's hospice. Children's work in basic social, literacy, numeracy and ICT skills provides a very good foundation for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall and ensures that the children make good progress in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers are clear about what children are going to learn. Planning for all groups of children is carefully matched to their needs so that their understanding and skills are extended well. Good levels of support consolidate children's learning and a particular strength is the outstanding questioning skills of teachers who direct well targeted questions to elicit thoughtful answers. Children are encouraged to think creatively and express their ideas coherently and are given time to do so. Those making a fruit salad were given opportunities to explore their senses through touching, smelling, tasting and describing a range of fruits. Children with learning difficulties receive assistance which is well judged to help them to develop their knowledge and understanding. Support staff are deployed well and have good experience of working in each curriculum area which ensures they gain a broad understanding of how well children are learning. Staff are therefore enabled to help the children make further progress. Moreover, effective systems are in place to assess children's progress and

check achievement. Staff make detailed and evaluative observations of children's progress towards their targets and use these well in planning the next steps.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, it is creative and well balanced. It is focused on stimulating children's interest and enjoyment so that they do well. There is a good programme of personal, social and health education, through which the children learn to lead healthy lives and to stay safe. The needs of children with learning difficulties and disabilities are met well. The curriculum is carefully planned with teacher-directed, child-led and group activities. However, procedures for planning are not yet consistent across the school which makes correlating the work done by the two teaching groups more complex than it needs to be. Good attention is given to the development of early reading, writing and mathematics skills. Pupils have very good opportunities to apply and develop their skills and knowledge through practical tasks in role play areas. The 'Travel Agents' is effective in supporting children's language development and mathematical skills are honed in the 'Beach Cafe'. Very good use is made of the excellent resources and facilities both in and out of doors. A good range of visits and visitors extends and enriches pupils' experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support provided for children are outstanding. All aspects of care for the children are exemplary. Apart from the rigour of all procedures, including those for child protection, this high level of care is the result of the commitment of all members of staff. The school monitors and tracks children's progress in all areas of learning and personal development very well. The staff use assessment information extremely well to plan work and set manageable targets for improvement for each child. Children who have learning difficulties receive excellent support. Through early identification, exemplary planning and thorough monitoring of progress, these children are able to meet their challenging targets. Children, parents and outside agencies work very well together with the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. The new headteacher has quickly established a rapport with all staff and as a result they feel valued and part of a successful team. She provides very clear direction and the response to new initiatives has been very positive. There is good capacity to further improve. The whole staff team have a very good understanding of the needs of young children and this is shown in the excellent quality of care and support provided and the strategies used to stimulate good learning. Staff with management responsibilities have begun to monitor the effectiveness of their subjects and areas. However, these evaluations are too

descriptive, telling what is going on but often omitting to record the impact the activities are having on children's learning. Governors are knowledgeable about the school and engaged in its activities. They show a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are fully involved in strategic planning. The school uses assessment information well to check its own performance. An example of this is that younger boys' achievement in writing skills and mathematics is not as good as those born between September and February and so require carefully targeted support. There is rigorous monitoring of planning, lessons and children's responses in order to ensure that children make good progress. Parents have complete confidence in the school – 'our son has flourished' was one of many such comments. Another cites how the school has taken pains to improve communication with parents, and it is clear that the school listens very carefully to the views of parents and children and responds to their ideas and concerns appropriately.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

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	2	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	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	1	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

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?	2	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	1	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

Thank you for making us so welcome and being so friendly when we visited you. We really enjoyed talking to you. I thought you would like to know what we found out about your school.

We think it is a good school. We could see that you really enjoy it and do lots of interesting and exciting activities. You are very good at listening to your teachers and enjoy looking at books. Your paintings and collages are exciting and you had great fun hunting for mini-beasts in the school grounds. You get on well with each other and the adults in the school. You take turns and share with others very well.

The adults make sure you have lots of exciting activities that are just right for you. They take very good care of you. We have asked them to make sure that you learn more about the wide range of cultures and religions of people in your local area.

All your teachers work very well together to make sure that you have the experiences you need. Your headteacher knows exactly how successful these activities are and we have asked that other teachers learn how to review them as well as she does.

Thank you again for making us feel so welcome.