



# Owler Brook Nursery Infants' School

Inspection Report

Better  
education  
and care

**Unique Reference Number** 107007  
**Local Authority** Sheffield  
**Inspection number** 287677  
**Inspection dates** 1–2 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Joe Peacock

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Wensley Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Sheffield
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7		South Yorkshire S4 8HQ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 2438611
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	322	<b>Fax number</b>	0114 2426165
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Leslie Green
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Val Rose
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 June 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Located in the industrial eastern area of Sheffield, the school is in a new building, provided under a private funding initiative six years ago. It is larger than average with almost nine out of ten pupils speaking English as an additional language. The largest ethnic group are of Pakistani origins, accounting for over six out of ten of all pupils. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average and there is an average number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The attainment of most pupils entering the large nursery is well below the level expected for pupils of this age with almost all experiencing difficulty in communicating in English. The long-serving deputy was appointed as acting headteacher in June of this year.

## 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. The acting headteacher is an extremely effective leader and has succeeded in not only maintaining but improving upon management initiatives aimed at driving up standards. The history of secure management has ensured that there is an excellent team spirit among staff and it is helping to minimise the impact of the headteacher's absence. All staff are highly motivated and determined to add to the school's successes. Particular strengths are how effectively the standards achieved by pupils and the performance of the school are monitored and evaluated. The quality of support for the many pupils who have English as an additional language and the close partnership that has been forged with all parents add significantly to the overall quality of provision for pupils and ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils. The school, however, has been too modest in judging its effectiveness as good in all areas. The personal development and well-being of pupils and the high level of care, support and guidance are outstanding. As a result, the school is providing good value for money.

The high quality of teaching and the exciting learning opportunities provided in the spacious and well resourced accommodation results in pupils in the Foundation Stage making excellent progress. The outstanding support provided by teachers and bilingual teaching assistants for the many pupils who find it difficult to speak English ensures that their progress is rapid. Despite this, hardly any manage to achieve all the targets expected of them by the end of their Reception year.

Overall, pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and by Year 2, standards are above average in writing and mathematics but below average in reading. This represents excellent progress by all groups of pupils. The school's performance in writing is a direct result of school initiatives to raise standards. The same determination to improve is in evidence with mathematics. In the 2005 national tests, standards in mathematics were below those for reading and writing. The preliminary results for 2006 show a significant improvement. The school is turning its attention to improving the relatively weaker performance in reading.

Pupils really enjoy coming to school and as a result of incentives such as the attendance trophy and the close cooperation between parents and the school, attendance has been improved to match the national average. The good progress pupils make is largely due to their excellent behaviour in class and around school and their good attitudes towards their work. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is another outstanding feature contributing very effectively to their personal development and well-being.

The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. Teachers plan lessons well so that pupils of all ability levels are challenged by and interested in the tasks that they are given to do. There is a good atmosphere for learning throughout. Teaching assistants provide excellent support for pupils' learning, especially for those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language. Good assessment procedures and the careful tracking of pupils' progress

enable teachers to closely monitor and evaluate the standards pupils are attaining. They use the wealth of assessment information most effectively to set challenging targets. The analysis of individual pupils' progress gives the school a clear picture of which pupils are doing well and which need additional help and support. The curriculum is good with modern technology being used effectively to enhance teaching and support pupils' learning in the different subjects. Pupils are given a good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle and are prepared very well for the next stage of their education. Pastoral care and support are outstanding and parents were keen to praise the school for how well it looks after their pupils.

The school has a good capacity to improve because of its deeply committed and hard-working staff, and the recent improvements that have been made in many aspects of the school's work support this judgement. Governors, led by their knowledgeable chair, are supportive and fully involved in monitoring school effectiveness.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Concentrate on raising standards in reading by Year 2 so that they match the improved standards already achieved in writing and mathematics.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The outstanding progress pupils make in all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage is due to the high quality of teaching, which ensures good continuity in learning from Nursery to Reception classes. Pupils' very low starting points and particular difficulty with English and the ability to socialise with others mean that hardly any achieve all their early learning targets by the end of their Reception year. Many still experience significant difficulties with speaking and listening skills by the time they leave Reception. As a result, their overall performance in communication, language and literacy lags significantly behind that in other areas of learning despite the rapid progress they make.

By Year 2, their remarkable progress has been maintained and overall standards are above average in writing and mathematics. This success reflects the emphasis the school has given to improving standards, especially in mathematics, which was the weakest performance for the school in the 2005 national tests. Standards in reading, however, are below average. The school has responded with a raft of initiatives designed to drive up standards but they have not yet had time to bring about improvement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress because of the well organised and high quality support that they receive.

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

### **Grade: 1**

High standards of behaviour are expected and achieved resulting in a safe, happy school free from bullying. The partnership with parents is an outstanding feature,

enhancing the provision for pupils' development and well-being. Adult learning classes for parents are popular and very well attended. These sessions give parents the knowledge and skills to support pupils' learning. Parents are realising the importance of good attendance and fewer are taking extended holidays during term time.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school celebrates every achievement, no matter how small, to successfully raise self-esteem and to motivate pupils to do the best they can. Cultural development has a high profile and all religious festivals are treated as special occasions to be enjoyed in school. Although the festival of Eid occurred during the half-term break, a party is planned, with presents for all pupils, after the inspection.

Pupils are energetic and understand the importance of healthy eating and exercise. In the Nursery and Reception, pupils do especially well in their physical development because of the many opportunities that are provided and the excellent use made of the outdoor area, including woodland walk.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. It is responsible for the exceptional progress that pupils are making in writing and mathematics from the Nursery to Year 2.

During the inspection, examples of outstanding teaching and learning were seen in Year

1 and in the Nursery where teachers had particularly high expectations of pupils. The outstanding quality and provision in the Foundation Stage is due to the enthusiasm and

care of teachers and their assistants. They ensure that pupils settle in quickly, feel secure and clearly enjoy their learning.

In all lessons, the bilingual support for pupils is exceptionally good. Almost all of the teaching assistants speak more than one language and their support to teachers is invaluable. Their skills ensure that all pupils not only learn English quickly but have the

help they need to complete their tasks. This additional adult support is a key factor contributing to the rapid progress pupils make, their good behaviour and the positive atmosphere for learning.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress as they are

exceptionally well provided for by teachers and teaching assistants who demonstrate a

good range of specialist teaching skills.

Assessment is thorough, including in the Foundation Stage, and it clearly shows how much progress pupils make. Assessment information is used well to set targets for individual pupils.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good overall and meets the needs of all learners well, contributing effectively to their good level of achievement. In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum is very well planned to meet all pupils' diverse needs and provide challenge and enjoyment.

The school is developing good links between the different subjects and there is a strong focus on learning English throughout. Key learning skills such as speaking, listening and thinking are promoted increasingly effectively and good use is made of computers to support learning in all subjects. In some classes, however, there is not the same strong emphasis on promoting speaking skills as there is in others.

The curricular provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a particular strength, being closely matched to their individual needs. Concerns are identified early and progress is closely monitored and promoted.

The school is extremely robust in promoting a healthy lifestyle for all pupils through its curriculum and they respond well. Games and exercise are given a high priority and pupils particularly benefit from the initiative for walking to school every Wednesday.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The safety and well being of pupils is of paramount importance to everyone who works in the school. Routine safety checks are rigorous and there are good procedures to keep pupils safe. Parents agree that their pupils are cared for exceptionally well and that the security they enjoy helps them to achieve as well as they do. All pupils know what their specific learning targets are and these are closely monitored each term. The typically held view is 'We do not need to worry about our pupils' education. We know they are in good hands.' The support given to pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent. Staff are very sensitive to pupils' particular needs and pupils also are encouraged to be supportive of others by, for example, learning Maketon sign language. Pupils who learn English as an additional language are supported exceptionally well by the highly skilled team of bilingual teachers and teaching assistants and as a result, they make rapid progress.

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## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The school has a history of strong and effective leadership and management. The experienced deputy headteacher has ensured continuity of leadership as acting headteacher, building successfully on the good work of the past. Strong teamwork is evident with all staff having clearly defined roles and responsibilities. All effectively contribute to school improvement planning, although there are too many priorities at present. Excellent links with the community and with parents, facilitated by the community manager, have resulted in strong support for the school. The outstanding home-school partnership ensures that pupils benefit fully from the educational opportunities offered. Highly effective procedures for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning lead to accurate and thorough evaluation of standards and the quality of provision. This has effectively helped to raise standards in writing and mathematics.

The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. A particular strength is the incisive leadership of the chair of governors in guiding and supporting the school through the headteacher's absence and in ensuring that the governing body is fully representative of the community. As a result, the capacity of the school to improve is good.



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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you all and looking around your classrooms. The things that we thought were particularly good, as well as your school dinners, were:

- how hard your acting headteacher and all the staff are working to help you to learn new things and to do good work
- how well you behave in class and try your best to finish all your work
- the excellent start that you all have in the Nursery and Reception classes with lots of interesting things to do both indoors and outdoors
- how well you are cared for and supported by your teachers, their helpers and all the lunchtime staff—we are sure it really helps those of you who are trying so hard to learn to speak English
- the way your parents and the school staff get on so well together
- that everyone walks to school every Wednesday—we think this is a great idea.

We are asking your headteacher to concentrate on improving one thing in particular:

- to concentrate even more on helping you with your reading.

We hope that you will help by remembering to take your reading book home and practise your reading with your mum or dad.

Thank you again for helping us with this inspection. We think that you are lucky to have such a lot of interesting and exciting things to do at school like your trips to Whirlow Farm and singing for the Lord Mayor. We can see why you enjoy coming to school so much.