



Blaggrave Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109749
Local Authority Reading
Inspection number 288485
Inspection date 1 March 2007
Reporting inspector Wiola Hola HMI

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Recreation Road
School category	Maintained		Tilehurst
Age range of pupils	3-5		Reading RG30 4UA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01189 015427
Number on roll (school)	68	Fax number	01189 015427
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Jan Mullan
		Headteacher	Mrs Vivienne Simpson
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a very small school. Most children are from White British backgrounds. A few children have learning difficulties and just a very few have English as an additional language. Children's home circumstances are broadly average. Children start the nursery with a wide range of skills which are average, taken as a whole.

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 outstanding features. The best features are in children's personal and physical development, in the care, support and guidance they receive and in the leadership and management of the school. Children are extremely well prepared for their next stages in education and they enjoy greatly working and playing in this delightful nursery school. Their behaviour is excellent and they cooperate well. Parents are entirely supportive and appreciative of the nursery's provision. They feel that the nursery not only cares extremely well for their children but that it also supports parents and listens to their views.

Children make good progress overall because teaching and learning are good. Staff are well deployed and work in very effective partnership with each other to plan learning and run the many different and engaging activities. Most children are confident speakers for their ages. Their knowledge of letter sounds is satisfactory but not as strong as other aspects of literacy. In most situations, staff pose suitable questions to determine what children can do confidently. Sometimes, the questioning is not probing enough to determine whether the tasks being undertaken by the children are indeed the right ones to challenge them suitably. The curriculum is good and topics are well resourced and imaginatively presented. Time is used well with a good balance of teacher-led sessions and tasks chosen by children. Classrooms are inviting and staff have made the best of rather old accommodation. The outdoor learning area is a valuable and rich resource. Book stocks are good but books are not located or presented in such a way as to encourage routine use.

Leadership and management are outstanding because provision and outcomes are constantly being reviewed to see what can be done even better. Actions for improvement are the right ones and are taken resolutely and successfully. Staff work with energy and enthusiasm and with clarity of purpose. Governance is good. The school has improved well since its last inspection and has good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen the teaching of phonics so that children learn to link sounds to letters more quickly and securely.
- Develop further staff skills in identifying what children can already do and in providing additional challenge for those children who are ready for it.
- Extend the way in which reading books are used in the library and classrooms.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children achieve well and grow in confidence to explore and learn. They make excellent progress in personal and social education because activities are planned so that they play and learn together, making decisions as they do so, sharing ideas, tasks and

equipment extremely well. Children's language and mathematical development is good and occurs in a wide range of relevant and engaging ways, through topics such as birthdays. Children enjoy books and listening to stories. Children's grasp of how letters link to sounds is a relative weakness, although still satisfactory. Children listen well and most speak confidently for their ages. Physical development is excellent and helped greatly by the very well equipped outdoor classroom. Well chosen topics enable children to develop well in their understanding about the world around them. Creative development is satisfactory. Children enjoy the weekly afternoon whole school singing session.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children settle to work quickly. They arrive each day happily and know the nursery routines extremely well. Movement from free play to whole class sessions happens unobtrusively with each child playing a part in clearing things away as necessary. Children know about healthy eating and drinking because these are discussed and encouraged regularly. They move around the various activities carefully and with consideration for others, taking turns and helping one another. Behaviour is excellent and they know right from wrong. Children are very well prepared for their next school. They are respectful to each other and adults and treat a visitor with a suitable caution and warm welcome.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Tasks are well planned and engaging for young children. The various activities run very smoothly because staff are deployed well, are clear about the purposes of each one and because they gently guide the children to get the most out of the tasks set. Children learn to listen and respond well during the whole class sessions. They maintain concentration well when, for example, looking at how candles burn, discussing what makes them happy, or when listening to a story. They make decisions and sustain interest in chosen tasks. They enjoy the outside area. They learn to use their bodies and are inventive in the games they devise in the outside house or with the system of pulleys with buckets, for example. In most cases, teachers or other helpers seek to explore the extent of children's understanding, but sometimes their questioning lacks incisiveness. Occasionally, staff talk too much and do not draw out from children what they find easy and what presents a challenge. In the main, though, staff take care to develop children's language and other skills through good conversations about the tasks in hand. In some activities, opportunities are missed for children to develop their awareness of letters and sounds and hence to speed up progress in this area.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum enables children to make good progress. It has particular strengths in the provision for children's personal and social development, in providing for children's knowledge and understanding of the world and for physical development. The children who have learning difficulties or English as a second language are well catered for. The school is rightly planning to develop its provision for children who are more able or talented. Curriculum planning is of high quality and draws upon the ideas and creativity of all staff. Topics are resourced well to add interest to learning. The library is good, but its location limits use by children. In addition, book corners in classrooms are limited in their appeal and underused. The outside classroom has been extensively developed in the last year or so with much success.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school takes excellent care of its children so that they are happy, secure and want to learn. Procedures for safeguarding children are robust. Supervision of children is excellent and combined with an encouragement to explore and learn with confidence and enjoyment. Those very few children whose behaviour can occasionally be challenging are helped very effectively to stay calm and maintain concentration. The school has good systems for keeping the progress of each child under review. Records are kept well and these add to the good arrangements in place for children's smooth transfer to their next school. A few children have individual education plans and these are generally helpful, but some entries are not specific enough about what exactly the child is aiming for.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

This school knows itself extremely well. The headteacher is outstanding. She and her staff constitute a highly effective team in which each member plays a vital part and is encouraged to contribute ideas. Staff development is given a high priority. The school has achieved 'Investor in People' status. The school improvement plan, based on an accurate school self-evaluation, addresses the right priorities for improvement. The school has demonstrated that actions taken yield positive outcomes, for example, in the development of the outside area and in the re-organisation of the curriculum. Governance is good. Governors are well informed and supportive. They are aware of the school's strengths and areas for development, but have yet to develop fully their role as critical friends. Parents' views are sought and acted upon. Parents are highly supportive of the school.

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Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
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	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

I visited your school recently. It is a good nursery school. I saw how well you work and play together. You are friendly and kind to one another and clearly like coming to school very much. I enjoyed listening to you singing in the red room, counting presents in the yellow room and arranging a birthday tea party in the green room. You have a lovely outdoor play area that helps you learn and grow strong.

The best things about your school are that it helps you to feel happy and to grow up healthy, safe and wanting to learn new things. The teachers and helpers take extremely good care of you and your parents are very pleased about that. Mrs Simpson is an excellent headteacher. She and all the other staff work together well to plan interesting activities for you.

I have asked the school to find more ways of helping you to learn about letters and the sounds they make. Teachers and helpers should help you make more use of the books in the library and classrooms. Sometimes, you could tell the teachers more about what you find easy to do or what is difficult.

I hope that you carry on enjoying every single day at this lovely nursery school. It helps you get ready for your next school very well.

Best wishes,

Mrs Wiola Hola

Her Majesty's Inspector