



# Cippenham Nursery School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 109762  
**Local Authority** Slough  
**Inspection number** 288489  
**Inspection date** 25 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Sean O'Toole

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery	<b>School address</b>	St Andrews Way
<b>School category</b>	Maintained		Cippenham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–5		Slough SL1 5NL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01628 661506
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	129	<b>Fax number</b>	01628 605902
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Susan Arthur
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jean Pocock
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 October 2001		

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Cippenham Nursery draws children from a wide range of backgrounds, which are mostly economically advantaged. Attainment on admission is wide ranging and broadly average. Most children's personal, social and emotional skills are secure because of the opportunities for pre-school educational provision at the Nursery. About one in ten has learning difficulties related to speech and language. About half of the children come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Their main home languages are Hindi, Urdu and Panjabi. Children start at the Nursery shortly after their third birthday.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This outstanding school lives up to its motto, 'Happy to be here'. Children clearly enjoy the excellent opportunities to learn, and rush into school to share their news with their teachers. As one girl said, 'I love coming here. It is such fun'. The children thrive on the challenging opportunities and skilful teaching which result in outstanding achievement. Rapid gains in their personal, social and emotional development equip the children as highly independent and purposeful learners who successfully attain standards which are advance of those expected for their age in all of the areas of learning.

One of the reasons for the school's success is the excellent leadership and management of the headteacher supported by a highly committed staff. This is a school which has gone from strength to strength because of incisive self-evaluation and a clear focus on meeting the needs of individuals. Governors are very supportive but their skills in checking on how the school achieves its objectives are underdeveloped. Rigorous self-criticism and a desire to see every child succeed have sharpened up the staff's skills in planning challenging activities both inside and outdoors. There is outstanding capacity to build on the school's success. Staff push themselves and motivate the children through an exciting curriculum. A recent success has been the introduction of new ways of teaching writing, which has lifted standards. Children can often be seen recording their ideas, practising letter formation and enjoying 'writing' their own stories.

Teaching is of high calibre. Because of accurate and perceptive assessments the staff know the needs of each child. Those with learning difficulties are supported very well and improve rapidly, especially in their language development. Children at an early stage of learning English thrive on opportunities to learn new words through songs and rhymes. Staff are good at asking questions to prompt children's thinking skills and, when they are involved in role-play, the learning moves on briskly. Occasionally, at the start and end of sessions staff miss opportunities to draw out the children's ideas to extend their vocabulary and speaking skills.

Underpinning the Nursery's work is the focus on care, guidance and support, which is outstanding. As one parent wrote, 'The school provides a safe, healthy environment with such a range of activities which has meant our child's introduction to the education system has been a wholly positive and enjoyable one'. Although the school's accommodation is due for replacement, the staff make every effort to use it effectively. As one parent said, 'It's a bit like the Tardis. It looks small and unattractive from the outside but opens up into a magical world for the children'.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Extend opportunities for the children to talk in detail about their plans for the session and to explain more fully what they have achieved.
- Sharpen up the governors' skills in assessing the work of the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Children leave the school with standards which are in advance of those expected for their age in all of the areas of learning. They are particularly successful in their personal, social and emotional development and are enthusiastic, hard working and well motivated learners. They show care and concern for others and have developed good listening skills. Achievement is outstanding and children of all abilities and backgrounds make rapid progress. There is a strong focus on identifying and supporting children with learning difficulties. These children grow in confidence as they practise sounds and learn new rhymes and alliterative poems to help them to improve their speech. Learning is made fun for all and this enables those at an early stage of English to thrive in a positive climate. Opportunities to use their home language alongside English increase their confidence, and the way the staff use sign language contributes much to the children's understanding. Children are very keen mathematicians and love to join in with the reading and telling of stories. Their progress in writing is especially good. Practical skills such as cutting, sticking, pedalling and climbing improve rapidly because of the challenging opportunities provided.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They show real concern for themselves and others. They are fascinated by the natural world, looking carefully at giant snails, observing flora and investigating fungi in the woodland. They respond with delight to all the Nursery offers and this contributes much to their learning. Children know how to keep safe and to look after themselves. Most are independent in getting dressed for activities and are good at handling tools and equipment safely. They have an excellent understanding of how to be healthy. They tuck into fruit and enjoy the opportunities to exercise energetically in the outside area. Children's personal, social and emotional development is outstanding. The newest children have settled into routines and quickly adjusted to working with others. One parent wrote, 'My daughter was very nervous at first but now she is confident, relaxed and at home in the Nursery'. Children get on well together; sharing equipment and taking turns are the norm. Behaviour is exemplary as the children show respect for adults and others. These outstanding attributes linked to their good knowledge of basic skills equips them for the next stage of their education. Children are sociable and friendly. They really enjoy the grand occasions such as performing songs for their parents.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teaching and learning are of high quality. All staff have an excellent understanding of how young children learn and are keen to attend courses to improve their skills. Sessions are planned thoroughly and include a focus on extending individuals. Each day there are 'apple children' who are the centre of observations and who also take responsibility for a variety of routines. Staff use this system to build up a detailed picture of each child's progress and then to plan any activities to support their learning. The most successful aspect of teaching is the staff's knowledge of individuals. This means that those with learning difficulties and those who are just beginning to learn English benefit from intensive high quality support. As one parent wrote, 'I have nothing but praise for the staff. They do a wonderful job and all the children are made to feel special'. The teaching of basic skills is well organised and these activities promote learning effectively, especially in writing and mathematical development. Sometimes staff do not provide enough opportunities for the children to talk about what they are going to do and to share what they have done. This area for development does not detract from the excellent rapport that staff have with the children and the outstanding relationships between them.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

Purposeful and fun-filled learning, both inside and outdoors, underpins the school's outstanding curriculum. Topics are planned thoroughly and include excellent links between the areas of learning. Activities are well balanced and provide opportunities for children to learn on their own or in groups. Staff are good at thinking on their feet and adapt the curriculum to circumstances such as experimenting with snow and ice as the weather changes. Staff think carefully about how to include all groups of children and this means that those at an early stage of learning English are fully engaged. There are excellent links with other schools and agencies. Excellent support from the speech therapists and involvement of the parents ensure that those with difficulties make rapid progress. Visits to places, such as Burnham Beeches, and visitors to school stir up the children's enthusiasm. The curriculum contributes much to the children's personal development and helps to prepare them for their next schools.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

Parents are full of praise for this aspect of the school's work. Staff have high levels of expertise in child protection and ensure children's well-being is at the heart of all they do. All staff have been checked for their suitability for working with children. The school is safe and secure, although the accommodation is in need of improvement. Staff are highly skilled in assessing the children and using the information to help

them to move on. All staff know the children and respond to their needs. Key workers provide individual and small group support and keep parents very well informed of their children's academic progress and personal development. Parents express delight with the progress files and written reports which keep them well informed of their children's progress. Individual targets for every child also enhance learning. The many opportunities for parents to be involved in early learning also contribute to creating an environment in which the children thrive. The shy and nervous are supported through an excellent induction programme. As one parent said, 'I am extremely happy with how this school is run. My daughter is always happy when she comes home and talks about her teachers as if they were her friends'.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are excellent. The staff are a high performing team who use each other's expertise to better their own practice. The result is that children benefit from high quality teaching and a vibrant curriculum. Since introducing a new system for self-evaluation, staff have become skilled in focusing on the school's strengths and areas for development and they willingly pursue ways of improving the provision. This has brought success in raising standards in writing and in providing opportunities for staff to have further training. Several staff have gained extra professional qualifications and this has strengthened teaching. It has also helped the headteacher to produce a well focused improvement plan. The staff's enthusiasm spills over and creates a vibrant ethos where everyone can succeed.

Governors are highly supportive. Health and safety checks and the school's success in achieving the Healthy Schools Award owe much to their contribution. However, they are not as successful in asking probing questions and rigorously challenging the school about its objectives. Parents are involved extensively in contributing to the life of the school.





## 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>	1
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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<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>	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	1
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 enjoyed visiting your school very much. You were really interesting to talk to and helped me to find out lots about your school. Thank you for asking me questions about my work and showing an interest in what I was writing. I know that you love coming to the Nursery and your mums and dads also think it is a wonderful place to learn. I agree with them that your school is outstanding.

There are lots of interesting and exciting things happening at your school which you can be proud of.

- You are super at listening to your teachers and doing what you are told.
- Everyone is very helpful.
- You work very hard.
- Your teachers care about each of you and plan activities which you enjoy.
- Everyone in the Nursery works together to make it an exciting place.
- I thought that your writing was really good.
- All the staff work hard and your headteacher guides them very well.

I have asked the governors to get better at checking on how well you are doing. I would also like you to talk more about your work and have asked the teachers to help you do this.

I know that you love your school and hope that you are always as happy.

Sean O'Toole

Lead inspector