



# Arlesdene Nursery School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 117066  
**Local Authority** HERTFORDSHIRE  
**Inspection number** 290706  
**Inspection dates** 17–18 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Alison Pangbourne

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>	Nursery	<b>School address</b>	Blindman's Lane
<b>School category</b>	Maintained		Cheshunt, Cheshunt
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–5		Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire EN8 9DW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01992 626879
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	72	<b>Fax number</b>	01992 901931
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Janet Mayes
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs J Allcott-Watson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 February 2002		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional inspector.

## Description of the school

This small nursery school shares its site with the Rocking Horse day care and together they provide integrated care and education for children from two to five years old. There is another privately run full day care provider next door. The large majority of children come from White British families with some from minority ethnic backgrounds. Very few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is very low. When children enter the nursery their attainment varies but overall is broadly typical for children of this age. The nursery is working towards becoming a Children's Centre.

## 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 nursery. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about it. One wrote, 'I would recommend Arlesdene to anyone who was looking for a dedicated, passionate and responsible nursery facility.' The children love it too. Most of them can hardly get in quickly enough - settling to activities without a backwards glance at their parent or carer!

In past years, children's attainment on entry has been below that typical for children of their age. However, recently this has improved as many of the children now benefit from the good provision in the Rocking Horse day care that shares the site. By the time children leave nursery, the vast majority easily exceed what is expected on entry to primary school. They make excellent progress because the quality of teaching is outstanding and the imaginative and exceptional curriculum, with its wide range of activities, both indoors and outdoors, gives them a flying start. Visits from members of the community add to their interest. Staff know all the children very well, including the very few who have learning difficulties or who speak English as an additional language. Children do so well because their progress is very closely monitored and any difficulties are swiftly resolved. Parents are also fully involved in their children's learning because they know their children's targets and are encouraged to help achieve them at home.

Children's personal development is outstanding. They become confident, enthusiastic learners who enjoy nursery enormously. They work very well independently and in groups because they receive such excellent care, support and guidance. Their behaviour is exemplary. The excellent emphasis on physical and mental activity provides a strong foundation for healthy living. They are encouraged to express their ideas and take on a high level of responsibility for such young children.

The excellent leadership and management of the headteacher are fundamental to the nursery's success. She constantly searches for ways to improve on what is already of very high quality. She has introduced several innovative ideas that contribute positively to the very high standards in all aspects of the nursery. For example, she has devised a way of assessing the 'wake and shake' activities that the children do each day to aid their concentration and coordination. The nursery now has clear evidence to show how well the children are developing in these areas. The main priority for the nursery is rightly the development of Children's Centre status, whilst ensuring that the impact is in keeping with the ethos and standards of the nursery. The nursery is also extending its integration with the day care. A good start has been made in developing a record keeping system between the two settings to ensure a smooth transition for the children. Governance is excellent. The headteacher and governors have an accurate view of how well the nursery is doing and work together extremely effectively to bring about improvement. The staff fulfil their management roles very well and there is a tangible sense of teamwork. Value for money is excellent and the quest for further improvements and the considerable developments that have taken place since the previous inspection show that the nursery has an outstanding capacity to improve even further.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen the record keeping systems between the day care and the nursery to ensure a smoother transition.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

Children make excellent progress because the quality of teaching is outstanding and the exciting curriculum encourages them to learn. The excellent achievement for all children, including those with learning difficulties, those who speak English as an additional language and those who are particularly gifted, is seen in the comprehensive records that are kept by the nursery and shared effectively with the adjacent primary school. These show that by the time the children leave the nursery, most are on course to exceed easily all the early learning goals, particularly in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. They do particularly well in personal development because they are encouraged to be independent from an early age.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Children thoroughly enjoy nursery and their behaviour is excellent. Attendance is good. They make huge strides in their personal development because the nursery places a very high priority on developing these skills. Each session includes 'water, wake and shake', where children drink water and then take part in exercises to develop their concentration. This contributes extremely positively to the children's health. The children take on plenty of responsibilities, such as taking turns to give out and collect beakers, filling in the weather chart and reacting immediately to the 'tidying up' bell. The children develop an excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness through the stimulating learning activities, such as the celebrations of their own and other cultures. The very strong focus on developing early literacy, numeracy and computer skills, together with the emphasis on good manners, means that children have an excellent basis for their future lives.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 1

Teaching is consistently of a very high quality throughout the nursery. All adults work very closely together as an excellent team to support the children and encourage all to do very well. Children respond extremely positively to staff's skilful questions that pick up on what they already know and take their learning further. Not a moment is wasted! At 'snack time' children offer suggestions for words that begin with the same

sound as their fruit. Activities move seamlessly from one to another. Excellent organisation means that children know the routines and quickly pack away when they hear 'Whistle while you work' playing. Staff have exceptionally high expectations of what children can achieve, based on very robust assessments of what they know and what they need to learn next. Their assessments of children's progress in 'wake and shake' skills contribute very positively to their excellent achievement.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

A parent sums up the curriculum admirably. She writes, 'I have been more than impressed with the varied and stimulating activities that are on offer both inside and outside the classroom.' Visitors add interest and excitement for the children. For example, children have recently been fascinated by newborn twins and by a road safety team. The local area is used very well to enrich learning, with visits to the fire station, the post office and the library. Very high quality resources encourage children to develop a wide range of skills and to extend their imagination. Provision for those with learning difficulties, those who speak English as an additional language and those who have special talents is excellent.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The nursery's very caring ethos means that children and their parents feel valued. Procedures for safeguarding children are robust and staff are well trained in child protection. Children's progress is tracked extremely thoroughly and the nursery maintains a wealth of data to show how children are progressing and to identify where extra help is needed. Children have their own 'next steps' targets, devised by the headteacher, that are shared with parents and this helps them do well. Links with other schools and agencies are excellent and the nursery does its best to ensure that children transfer smoothly from setting to setting. As part of the integration of the day care services, the nursery has begun to develop record keeping systems between the two settings to improve further the transfer arrangements.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher provides inspirational leadership. Everything she does is for the benefit of the children. She is involved in a variety of projects, some of national importance, all of which are helping to raise standards and achievement. For example, the introduction and assessment of 'wake and shake' activities are helping to identify children who have weaknesses in coordination and concentration. The establishment and integration of the day care are already raising standards. The headteacher, staff and governors thoroughly monitor the work of the nursery and all fulfil their management roles very effectively. Governance is excellent. Governors are very well informed and act as 'critical friends', ensuring that the new developments meet the

nursery's needs. The nursery is currently working towards the development of a Children's Centre to improve facilities further for the community.

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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>	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	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

<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	1
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**

18 January 2007

Dear Children,

Arlesdene Nursery School, Blindman's Lane, Cheshunt, Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire, EN8 9DW

I have asked Mrs Watson to read this to you. I expect you saw me in your lovely nursery recently. I really enjoyed visiting you. Thank you for talking to me and showing me what you were doing. I would like to tell you what I liked best.

I thought you were all very good children and you all played very nicely together. You have some lovely toys to play with and to help you learn. You did your 'wake and shake' exercises very well! I enjoyed watching you have such fun in the garden! All the grown-ups look after you extremely well and help you to learn about new things. Mrs Watson makes sure your nursery keeps getting better in every way. Your families know that you go to one of the best nursery schools.

I have asked Mrs Watson to make your nursery even better by asking the grown-ups to tell each other what those of you who go to Rocking Horse have done there, to make it easier for you to have new things to do when you start nursery.

I hope you carry on enjoying your time at Arlesdene Nursery School and do well in your next school.

Best wishes

Alison Pangbourne

Lead inspector