



Grandpont Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122969
Local Authority Oxfordshire
Inspection number 292545
Inspection date 13 March 2007
Reporting inspector Margaret Goodchild

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Whitehouse Road
School category	Community		Oxford
Age range of pupils	3–5		OX1 4QH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01865 242900
Number on roll (school)	72	Fax number	01865 254878
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Nick Graham
		Headteacher	Ms Elaine M Smith
Date of previous school inspection	29 January 2001		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
3–5	13 March 2007	292545

© Crown copyright 2007

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 an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Grandpont Nursery School is situated in purpose-built accommodation near the centre of Oxford. It has a full-time equivalent of 50 places, taken up by 72 children. Younger children begin by attending part time, before attending full time as they approach transfer to primary school in the term after their fifth birthday. The school is oversubscribed and children come from a wide area, from backgrounds that are socially and culturally mixed. The number from minority ethnic backgrounds has risen significantly over the last two years, so that about a quarter of the children are now of Asian heritage and at early stages in learning English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to the nursery is average overall. The school was until recently a Beacon Nursery School and has provided support and training to staff from other schools locally and further afield.

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 school that provides children with a magical start to their education. Parents are delighted with its work and many readily express their appreciation. As one parent said, 'The staff, provision and resources are all outstanding - we are very lucky to have such a fantastic Nursery: our daughters have loved every minute of their time there'. Another commented on how, 'The school has exceeded our expectations on all fronts'.

The school is exceptionally effective in developing children so that they become happy and secure within themselves, interact skillfully with one another and are highly receptive to learning. As a result, children's achievement is outstanding and overall standards are well above average. Children achieve particularly well in personal, social and emotional development, in their knowledge and understanding of the world, and in their creative and physical development as a result of outstanding teaching.

Much of the learning comes from independent and spontaneous exploration within an indoor and outdoor environment that is very carefully planned to stimulate children's imagination and problem solving. As a result, they discover that learning is an exciting activity that stems from their own experience. The curriculum meets children's needs exceptionally well, enriched by an outstanding programme of visits and visitors. Relationships between adults and children are exemplary so that children's self-esteem is continuously raised and they are encouraged to develop their curiosity and to fulfil the impulse to learn. Comprehensive systems are in place for recording children's attainment and for identifying the next step in each child's learning. The school is careful to check that all children are achieving as well as they should.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the work of the school and is successful in motivating all the staff to work for the total development of each child. The previous inspection identified no issues for development but the school has nevertheless built very actively on its work since that time. It has sustained high quality provision and is exceptionally well placed to improve further as it prepares for its establishment as a children's centre. In preparation for this important development, training has begun to provide the skills staff will need in working with younger children. Currently, the school does not have the necessary level of expertise required for the teaching and care of children from birth to three.

What the school should do to improve further

- Prepare for the establishment of the children's centre particularly by developing staff skills in working with children from birth to three.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding and standards are well above average. Children of all ages reach exceptionally high standards in personal, social and emotional development, in

knowledge and understanding of the world, in creative development and physical development. They reach above average standards in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development, where more able children exceed national expectations for this age group by the time they leave. Communication and language development is promoted exceptionally well by the many high quality interactions between adults and children; this particularly benefits those children who are learning English as an additional language. Progress in the development of literacy skills is good. They show an enjoyment of books, make up stories and increasingly use writing for a range of purposes. Children make particularly good progress in their knowledge of the language of mathematics and problem solving, often as a natural part of their play or exploration. They are confident in using computers independently and learn a great deal about nature through having regular access to the outdoor area and the wood. Their creative and imaginative development is fostered extremely well through the opportunities to make decisions and choices for themselves, as well as through the outstanding opportunities provided through work with a series of artists-in-residence. The children are physically very confident, whether climbing, working with tools or carefully cutting out images they have drawn. There is no significant difference in the overall progress of any groups of pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. Children are very happy and confident. They are at the same time lively and extremely well behaved. They relate very well with one another, playing harmoniously together and readily discussing their ideas with one another. The development of their skills as independent learners is also outstanding; they are contented working on their own, exploring resources and pursuing their own interests. Even the youngest children quickly become absorbed in activities and apply themselves with focused concentration for long periods of time. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Children develop a great deal of self-assurance, realising that they matter, as well as learning to show care and thought for one another. They respond very well to the healthy and nutritious food provided for lunch and at snack times and relish the many opportunities provided to take part in physical activities. They show a very high level of enjoyment and are highly receptive to the learning opportunities the school affords. They make outstanding progress in developing their awareness of being a member of a community, within and beyond the school, and are prepared exceptionally well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. For much of their time, children are free to choose from a wide choice of activities that provide a wealth of learning opportunities both indoors and out. Staff ensure that these activities and the resources that support them are highly stimulating and varied. This provides children with a great deal of freedom to explore and learn through investigation, backed up by adult support and direction. The best teaching occurs when adults work with small groups and with individuals during this time, unobtrusively extending children's skills, knowledge and understanding. Assessment information is shared between all the staff and with parents, so that everyone involved with each child knows how best to take his or her development forward. A parent commented on this by saying, 'An impressive feature of the school is the individual attention which the teachers focus on the children - quite often at the end of the morning they will find time to explain what our son has been doing, which enables us to continue with the activity or relate to it later in the day.'

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. The school provides children with a wealth of learning experiences that are planned so that they build naturally and holistically on children's interests as well as covering the six areas of learning. The way the different areas are linked so that an activity simultaneously covers, for instance, communication and language, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, is a particularly good feature of the curriculum. Children's learning is enriched by a wide range of visits and visitors. They have had the opportunity to work with a series of artists-in-residence, which has provided a wide range of magical experiences. The secure wooded area in the school grounds also gives children a wealth of inspiring experiences and contributes to their achievement in all areas of learning. The school has good links with the main primary school to which children transfer and works closely with a number of other educational establishments.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. All the staff show a very high level of sensitivity to the personal and academic needs of each child. They provide an environment that is exceptionally caring and supportive in which children are guided continuously to fulfil their potential. Thorough systems are in place to ensure that children are protected and safeguarded. Extensive links with therapists and outside agencies and outstanding partnership with parents underpin the care and support provided for the children. The school provides a great deal of support for families and

the additional support for Bengali speaking mothers has already begun to increase their involvement with their children's learning and have a positive effect on the achievement of these children. The school has developed an exceptionally effective system for recording and tracking each child's progress, which it regularly shares with parents and uses to pass on information about children when they move on to primary school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. Staff at all levels are involved in checking the effectiveness of the school's work, through regular discussion, observing one another and identifying ways to improve. Managers are very thorough in checking the progress of different groups of children and quickly take action wherever particular children need additional help. For instance, in order to raise the achievement of minority ethnic children, the school increased the support it provides to the parents of these children. All the staff pay particular attention to meeting the needs of every child and the school has been recognised for its work in including all children equally through the award of the Inclusion Quality Mark. It has recently been short-listed also for the Equality and Diversity Award. Governors work well with the staff in the process of self-evaluation and in planning future developments. They ask challenging questions as well as providing support in the day-to-day life of the school.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	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

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
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

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?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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	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 really enjoyed my visit to your nursery school, seeing what a lovely time you have playing together and learning new things. Now, I am writing to let you know what I found out about it.

This is an outstanding school that gives you a really magical start to your education. I could see why your parents are so pleased that you are able to go to this school. A lot of them wrote and told me about how good it is.

I could see that you are happy, that you really enjoy all the exciting things there are to do, and that you are very keen to learn. You are making outstanding progress, especially in finding out how to get on with one another, developing your independence and exploring the world around you. You have wonderful opportunities to do creative things and time spent outdoors and in the wooded area is not only exciting, it also helps your learning a lot in all sorts of ways.

A lot of the time, you are developing and learning through choosing from all the lovely activities the staff provide for you and they are really good at helping you find out new things. All the staff are really sensitive to each one of you and care for you very much. They are also very careful to plan for each of you, so that learning builds on what you already know. Your parents like being included in this information so that they know how to help you at home as well.

The school is led and managed extremely well. All the staff work together to make the experiences as good as possible for you. Soon, the school will become a children's centre, which means it will do even more work with the community and it will have children under the age of three as well as those of your age. I have asked the headteacher to make sure that all the staff know exactly how to teach and care for really small children, from babies onwards, so that the children's centre becomes as good as the school already is.

Yours sincerely

M J Goodchild

Lead inspector