

# The Slade Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122970
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	292546
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Vanessa Ward

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	72
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Kirsten Burrell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Maggie Neil
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 January 2002
<b>School address</b>	Titup Hall Drive Headington Oxford OX3 8QQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01865 750670
<b>Fax number</b>	01865 308570

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school serves an area that has significant social disadvantage. Approximately half of the children are of white British heritage. The other children come from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages. More children than usual are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Most children attend the school either every morning or every afternoon. During the term in which they reach their fifth birthday, they attend full-time. Staff from Wood Farm Primary School work in partnership with the Nursery school staff to teach the oldest children. A day nursery is also established on the site. The school is currently being developed as 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: 2

Slade Nursery is a good school. It provides a good quality of education and has several outstanding features. The high quality of care for each child contributes to the children's outstanding personal development. Their very positive attitudes and enthusiasm are fostered through an outstanding curriculum which provides an excellent range of experiences from which they can learn. The children's personal development is enriched by a strong focus on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children's levels of self-esteem are high because of carefully planned opportunities which encourage independence and allow them to make choices and take on responsibilities. Energetic activity in the garden, and daily opportunities to eat healthily and learn about foods, help the children to gain an excellent knowledge of healthy living. The children behave very well and are successfully taught to understand that their behaviour has consequences for other people. The strengths of the relationships within the school help the children to feel very secure.

The children's achievement is good and is supported by good teaching. Most children enter the school with skills that are lower than those usually found in three-year-olds. This means that even though they make good progress, by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage, few reach the levels expected for their age in the areas of learning. The staff work hard to identify where progress can be accelerated. The teaching of letter names and sounds has recently been given greater focus and the school acknowledges that this work needs to be strengthened. Opportunities for children to develop speaking and listening skills are part of the nursery's planning, but sometimes opportunities are missed, for example, when children could share their ideas with a partner before discussing them with their group.

Leadership and management are good. There is a strong sense of teamwork among the staff and governors, and they are keen to improve the school and to forge greater links with the community. The school works well to enhance the children's well-being and achievement through its work with the primary school on site, other agencies and parents. It seeks and values the views of all stakeholders when evaluating its strengths and weaknesses. This leads to an accurate view of where improvements can be made. Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate the high levels of care provided. One parent commented, 'This is a great place to learn'.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the teaching of letter sounds and names is taught through a wide range of learning experiences.
- Expand the opportunities planned to develop children's speaking and listening skills.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Although they achieve well few children reach the levels expected for their age by the time they leave the school. When children enter the school, many have poorly developed skills, particularly in speaking, listening and social development. From these low starting points, the school compensates by focusing especially on developing the children's personal, social and emotional development. As a result, the children make particularly good progress in gaining confidence, becoming independent and developing positive attitudes. Good teaching and excellent care help them to make good progress in all areas of learning. By the end of the

Foundation Stage, their skills in physical development are close to the expected levels because of the many opportunities they are given to use large and small apparatus and equipment. Assessment information shows that all groups of children, including those who are learning English as an additional language, make good progress. Work introduced to boost the teaching of letter names and sounds is beginning to produce improvement, but the school is aware that more needs to be done.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The children's personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Their smiling faces when they arrive at school demonstrate their happiness. It is very apparent that they feel very comfortable with the school routines. Although attendance is below average, most children attend regularly. The school works extremely hard to improve the attendance of the few poor attenders. Children share, take turns and play cooperatively very well. These skills, combined with their improving basic skills, prepare the children well for the future. Cultural understanding and harmony is particularly strong because the school successfully celebrates and teaches about the cultural heritages of its children. The children gain excellent understanding and experience of caring for the environment through their involvement in composting food waste and saving rain water in the garden. Children are extremely willing to take on responsibilities and carry them out very conscientiously, such as helping at snack time and getting out and tidying away equipment.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good and contribute to the children's good progress. The relationships between adults and children boost their confidence and promote self esteem. Opportunities for children to speak and listen are regularly planned. Children enjoyed taking turns to say what they were looking forward to and listened courteously to the views of others. Sometimes opportunities for encouraging discussion in pairs are missed. This means that children who are more reluctant to speak in a group are not given the necessary encouragement to increase their confidence and skills. Children who speak little English are taught well and staff make sure that they are helped to join in all activities so that they make good progress. The intervention of the staff in children's imaginative play is particularly successful and stimulates enjoyment. Children playing on the pirate ship were encouraged by the interventions of the staff to develop their adventure making good use of their imaginative ideas. Support staff work well with the children as well as playing a full part in contributing to planning and assessment.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The outstanding curriculum is both broad and exciting. The balance between adult-led activities and those chosen by the children is excellent, and it ensures that academic rigour is combined with fun and investigation. Both the outdoor and inside areas are very well organised to encompass all areas of learning, and they provide constant stimulus for the children. They thoroughly enjoy growing food in the nursery garden and then eating it. During the inspection, the 'seaside' role-play stimulated a lot of learning in the sandpit and pirate ship. Teaching

children how to keep healthy and stay safe are integrated very well into the curriculum. Visitors help children to learn about keeping their teeth clean and their bodies healthy. Visits from artists and the fire brigade all enrich the children's learning. The school has a strong focus on integrating the basic skills of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development with information and communication technology (ICT) across all areas of learning, and this contributes significantly to their good progress.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. All procedures to safeguard children and keep them healthy and safe are well established. The school's processes for managing behaviour are applied consistently and are effective. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported well through the school's provision and its links with other agencies. Children who are learning English as an additional language are helped to make good progress. Intensive support when they are first admitted enables these children to settle quickly and gain confidence. The school works very hard to keep parents informed about what their children are learning through regular meetings and via a daily information board placed outside the school. It is planning to increase parents' involvement in and contribution to their children's learning. The academic tracking of children's progress is extremely rigorous. It involves all staff and is used well to determine what each child needs to learn next. The induction process for new children is very effective and enables them to settle quickly and happily. It is tailored to meet individual needs. Careful thought is given to the children's transfer to the primary school, with continuity of the curriculum and teaching and learning styles currently being reviewed.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher works very hard to bring about school improvement. She has established a strong sense of teamwork among the staff and governors. Most of the governing body is newly appointed, and governors are receiving training to help them understand their roles and responsibilities, and to establish how a governing body should function. Subject leaders contribute well to developments in their areas of responsibility. They have successfully led initiatives to improve communication, language and literacy and mathematical development and have monitored planning, teaching and children's work. During the last year pressures on the headteacher's time, largely caused by staffing issues, have reduced the time available to her for monitoring. There are plans to increase this in the coming year. The school's track record of improvement, including the development of the outdoor area and the improvements seen so far in children's knowledge of letter sounds and names, indicates that it has good capacity to improve.

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## Annex A

## 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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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	3
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

<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	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	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>	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.



## Annex A

**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	2
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	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

3 September 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of The Slade Nursery School, Oxford, OX3 8QQ

I enjoyed my visit to your school very much. It was wonderful to see what a happy time you have there.

You really enjoy school because there are so many exciting things to do and learn. I could see how much fun you were having in the pirate ship. You caught a lot of fish in your nets! Your mums, dads and carers think that your school is a good place to be and I agree with them.

The grown ups look after you very well and make sure that you are happy in school. They are good at teaching you and keep checking how well you can do things. They are helping you learn to read and write and I have asked them to do even more of this so that you become really good readers and writers. There are lots of times when you can talk in school and share your ideas. The grown ups are going to be helping you to do this more often.

You eat fruit and drink water and milk in school and get lots of exercise in the garden, and these things help you to be healthy. You are good at sharing and taking turns and you behave very well.

I hope that you carry on enjoying your school and doing good work.

Good wishes

Vanessa Ward Lead Inspector