

# West Kidlington Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122979
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	292550
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Goodchild

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>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	49
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr D Rochford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr E Symonds
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 February 2002
<b>School address</b>	Oxford Road Kidlington OX5 1EA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01865 373369
<b>Fax number</b>	01865 377080

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<b>Age group</b>	3–5
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school draws children from Kidlington on the outskirts of Oxford, including some from an area of social deprivation. Since the last inspection, attainment on entry has declined, with an increasing number of children with low attainment in social development and communication. English is an additional language for a significant minority of the children. The nursery school shares the same building as the West Kidlington Primary School and the two schools have the same headteacher. The nursery school's work has been included in the primary school's successful bids for the International School award, Healthy School award, Investors in People, Active Mark award, Eco School silver and Artsmark silver awards. The school was nominated for the Oxfordshire Equality Awards in 2005 and 2007, where it received 'runners up' award for inclusion, and it is to be assessed for the Inclusion Quality Mark later this term.

## 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 nursery school that is highly appreciated by parents. They say that 'it is a lovely, happy place' and that their children are 'always very excited to come to school'.

Children's personal development is outstanding as a result of the exceptionally good level of care they receive. They benefit enormously from the way the nursery school, along with its partner primary school, promotes personal values such as toleration, patience and honesty. As a result, children show an unusual level of maturity and understanding for their age. They behave well and enjoy the activities provided for them.

Children join with standards that are below what is normally expected for children of this age, and in some cases well below. They achieve well to reach broadly average standards. They make outstanding progress in personal, social and emotional development, and good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. At the end of their time in the Foundation Stage, boys performed significantly less well than girls in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development in 2006. Currently, there are no marked differences between the overall achievement of different groups of children, including those with learning difficulties or for whom English is an additional language. All the children make good progress in speaking and listening, with some good progress in reading. Progress in writing is not as good, but it is satisfactory. This is because the staff do not use information from their assessments to identify the next steps in learning as fully as they should, especially when developing the writing skills of older pupils. Children make good progress in counting and in recognising shapes and patterns. The school has rightly identified the need to improve their calculation skills by applying their knowledge of numbers in a range of situations.

Teaching is good overall and especially so in personal, social and emotional development. A good range of activities within each session promotes children's overall development effectively. However, opportunities to develop thinking skills and problem-solving through extended projects do not feature within planning as much as they could. As a result, children are not always challenged as much as they should be. The curriculum is enriched considerably by the outdoor learning area and by a good range of visits and visitors in to school.

The school is led and managed well, and there have been good improvements since the last inspection. Managers are accurate in their judgement about the school's effectiveness and the headteacher, governors and staff are working together increasingly well to identify how things could be made even better for the children. The school is, therefore, well placed to improve further and provides good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase opportunities for children to develop their calculation skills in mathematics and their thinking and problem-solving skills through extended projects.
- Raise standards in literacy by making greater use of assessment information to ensure that writing tasks are matched exactly to the next steps in children's learning, especially for the older children.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children reach above average standards in personal, social and emotional development, and the skills they gain in this area support their overall achievement very well. The children listen well and they are confident in speaking to one another, to adults or in front of the rest of the class. They enjoy stories, show interest in books, and learn to link sounds and letters. They are beginning to use their knowledge of letters and sounds in their own attempts at writing. They make satisfactory progress in writing and in forming letters but difficulty with this holds back some older children who have clear ideas about what they want to record. Their good creative development is evident in lively drawings, for instance of dinosaurs and in their computer art. Children make good progress overall in mathematics, reaching broadly average standards. However, they only make satisfactory progress in developing their calculation skills. Children reach average standards in their knowledge and understanding of the world, supported by some stimulating visits and by a range of experiences that they share with the primary school. The outdoor area promotes children's physical development well.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Children are happy, relaxed and confident. They are eager to attend and behave well, many exceptionally so. They play harmoniously together, showing care and consideration for one another. They make good progress in learning about healthy living and respond well to opportunities to eat fruit at snack times and to take part in physical activity. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They show an unusual maturity for their age during reflection. They silently close their eyes or focus on a candle, imagining themselves in a peaceful place such as a desert island. The promotion of values and the opportunities children are given for regular reflection are a particular feature of the school's work that has an outstandingly positive effect on children's overall development. The personal qualities that they develop, combined with their good overall grasp of basic skills, prepares them well for the next stage in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers enjoy very positive relationships with the children and parents say that they 'encourage learning in a fun way'. Children learn in an environment that is calm, focused and well resourced. Staff manage children's behaviour effectively and the nursery is well organised. Interactions between adults and children promote children's language development well. Staff encourage children to talk about their ideas. They also make good use of questioning to check children's understanding and to encourage them to take an active part in learning. Assessment is satisfactory overall. Children's attainment is checked when they join the nursery and their progress is recorded regularly, mainly through detailed observations. This information is used satisfactorily to group children for some activities but it is not used effectively enough to plan the next steps in children's learning in writing or in putting together an overall record of each child's progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good, enriched considerably by the outdoor learning area and by a good range of visits and visitors in to school. Children benefit enormously from involvement in a range of activities and initiatives shared with the partner primary school, for instance, its work as an Eco School, its 'values' approach to education, and developing links with schools abroad.

Attractive displays stimulate children's imaginative development well and a good range of activities is provided in each session. At times, activities challenge children to think deeply, but there are not enough extended projects that link a number of areas of learning to promote children's thinking, creativity and problem-solving skills. The use of the interactive whiteboard is at an early stage of development, but children are given weekly access to the primary school's computer suite.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Children receive outstanding care, support and guidance. They learn and grow in a warm and caring atmosphere within the nursery itself and in the partner primary school in which it is located. Children are carefully protected and effectively safeguarded. The school has close links with a number of other agencies to meet the personal and learning needs of those children who need extra support. The school provides well for children with learning difficulties and those who are acquiring English as an additional language, through the support provided by the primary school special educational needs coordinator and the work of a teaching assistant. Children receive outstanding guidance in their personal development. Senior managers carefully track the progress of different groups of children. Staff in the nursery provide some valuable feedback to children about how well they are doing, but a lack of clarity in assessment means that this area is not quite as good as it should be. The school has developed a strong partnership with parents and keeps them well informed.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher and governors provide clear direction, with a strong commitment to making the school as good as possible. Intended improvements are planned very thoroughly and the school is accurate in evaluating its own effectiveness. The day-to-day work of the nursery is managed satisfactorily, with good liaison between the nursery teacher and the Reception class teacher in the primary school. Links with the Year 1 teacher, for those children who transfer straight from the nursery school into Year 1, are less well established. The school has, correctly, identified the need for nursery staff to become more involved in self-evaluation as a way of refining their practice.

The governing body makes a significantly better contribution to the school than it did at the last inspection. Governors now support and challenge the school well. The work of the committee that focuses specifically on the work of the nursery is highly focused. Increasingly close collaboration between the headteacher, chair of governors, Reception class teacher from the partner primary school, and the nursery teacher provides a valuable platform for development and means that the school is well placed to improve further. The headteacher and chair of

governors have a clear vision for how the nursery can be moved forward, in parallel with developments in the primary school, to ensure that all children make as much progress as they should.





## 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	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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>	2
<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	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

30 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of West Kidlington Nursery School, Kidlington, OX5 1EA

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your nursery school. I enjoyed my visit and it was lovely to see all the interesting things you do. Now, I am writing to tell you what I found out about your school.

This is a good nursery school. Your parents are pleased with it. They say that you are happy and that the adults make learning fun for you. You are doing well in learning new things and really well in finding out important things about yourself and others. You are confident and know that you matter. I was very pleased to see how kind and patient you are with one another and how well you play together.

The teacher and other adults who work with you care for you very much and make sure you are safe. They give you interesting things to do and are always ready to help you. The headteacher and the governors know the school well and they are working hard to make it even better for you. I have asked them to make sure the staff:

- think very carefully about what each of you needs to do next, especially to make progress in your writing
- give you more chances to think really hard and to solve problems through big projects that link all sorts of different sorts of ideas together, and to get better at using what you know about numbers in mathematics.

You can help them by trying really hard in your writing and by enjoying the rest of your time in the nursery school.

Yours sincerely

M J Goodchild Lead Inspector