

Kenilworth Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125488
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	293279
Inspection date	21 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Len Bird
Headteacher	Sarah M Harris
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2002
School address	Bertie Road Kenilworth CV8 1JP
Telephone number	01926 853394
Fax number	01926 853394

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The nursery school offers 80 part-time places. Most children spend three and some five terms there before moving on to other schools. The majority of children are of White British heritage. Some of the small number of children from minority ethnic groups speak English as an additional language. Attainment on entry is around the level usually found. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is slightly below average. The school is developing provision for parents and children of 0–3 years and will become a Children's Centre next year.

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 nursery school provides a very high quality education. Everything about the nursery encourages children to learn and to discover things for themselves as well as instilling in them a recognition that they can succeed and the motivation to do so. Children love being there and say they would like to come every day of the week. Parents are delighted with the nursery and its outstanding work. One parent stated, 'It is an excellent nursery, stimulating, fun and with very caring and professional staff. You can't beat it.'

Children's achievement is excellent. Standards are well above those expected for this age in all areas of learning. Children's personal development is outstanding. They are extremely well motivated and work very hard at their activities. Children's behaviour is excellent. They get on very well with each other and play an important part in nursery life, helping take responsibility for the resources they use. Early literacy and numeracy skills develop especially well, although children's knowledge of letter sounds is not as good as their other reading skills.

A major reason for the nursery's success is the inspirational leadership of the headteacher, who has an exceptional ability to make things happen. Her vision of providing extended support for children and their families has led to especially good activities being put in place for parents and younger children, which make a major contribution to nursery children's welfare and progress. As a result, the nursery school will become part of a children's centre next year. Leadership and management are excellent. The outstanding systems for monitoring and evaluating children's progress and the effectiveness of its work means the school has a very clear and accurate picture of how well it is doing. Improvement since the last inspection has been exceptional and the school provides excellent value for money. It is determined to continue to provide children with the very best education in all areas of its work. As a result, it is particularly well placed to improve further. An example of this is the school's determination to raise children's knowledge of letter sounds to the same high level as other reading skills.

Considerable thought has been given to creating a rich, stimulating and exciting environment that encourages children to learn. The curriculum is outstanding. Different learning areas, including the sensory studio where children take part in dance, drama and creative activities, are exceptionally well resourced. As a result, children learn easily. Teaching and learning are excellent. Adults are especially good at helping children to discover things for themselves. Much discussion goes on, encouraging children to understand what they are learning. Activities are fun, with a very good emphasis on learning through games, songs and rhymes which encourage imagination and understanding. Care, support and guidance are excellent. Adults pay exceptionally good attention to children's welfare. They give children excellent advice and guidance to help them improve in both their personal and academic development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on and extend the activities put in place to develop children's knowledge of letter sounds.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children of all abilities and needs make outstanding progress because of the high quality teaching and curriculum. The vast majority reach standards above those expected by the time they leave, with a number reaching well beyond this.

Children's outstanding personal and social development makes a particularly important contribution to their attitudes to learning. Children's oral language skills are exceptionally good and they talk confidently to adults and each other. Children's writing skills are of a very high standard. They enjoy stories and recall the events. They predict what might come next and recognise many letters and simple common words. Children are beginning to link sounds to letters. However, although above expectations, standards in this aspect are not as high as for other reading skills. Numeracy skills, especially children's ability to do simple calculations, are very high. The whole nursery environment encourages children to explore the world around them. Consequently, they make excellent progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The 'Fit for Learning' programme has an especially beneficial effect on children's excellent physical development. A wealth of outstanding creative activities helps children to do very well in this area. Some of their art work is of an exceptionally high standard.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Spiritual development is enhanced by exceptional opportunities for reflection in lessons and in the sensory studio. Moral and social development is excellent. In this happy, exciting nursery, children are extremely well behaved, remaining busy throughout sessions. Relationships with adults and other children are extremely positive. Attendance is above average. Excellent activities, the involvement of parents and work undertaken in projects, such as the celebration of Diwali, help raise children's awareness of their own and other cultures. Children's knowledge of how to keep safe and healthy is excellent. They feel very safe and secure in the nursery so that they happily explore the sensory studio and the superb and exciting outdoor area. Children look forward to the fruit provided and those having packed lunches choose healthy options. They contribute very well to the community, confidently sharing work with visitors and parents or carers. Children develop exceptionally good skills to support them in future life. For example, during the inspection, children working in the construction area told inspectors, 'We're going to build a house, but we have to stop the traffic on this road first'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Nursery staff are highly skilled educators who know exactly how to motivate children and continually challenge them to make progress. They are very skilled at explaining and demonstrating new things so children grasp these quickly. Active, enjoyable tasks make learning relevant and fun so that children are very highly motivated to succeed. The use of discussion throughout activities encourages children's understanding and promotes their oral language. Careful prompting and questioning allow children to discover things for themselves. Children are taught to succeed and are helped to do so. Excellent support for children who have specific

needs means that no child ever feels a failure. The judicious use of praise and encouragement is especially good in supporting progress. High quality assessment information is used to plan activities particularly well matched to the stage at which individual children are working. The school's excellent partnership with parents means they are especially well involved in supporting their children's learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is exceptionally well designed to meet children's needs. Activities are imaginative, exciting and highly motivating. The excellent balance and range of activities cover small-group teaching sessions and adult-directed and child-initiated tasks which support learning especially well. New activities for helping children to link sounds to letters are already improving progress. The exceptionally well-designed accommodation provides a rich and stimulating environment that enthuses children and invites them to investigate things for themselves. Carefully created areas support learning across many curriculum aspects. For example, the sensory areas with their thoughtfully chosen resources stimulate children's imagination and creativity as well as providing areas for quiet reflection or scientific investigations. Children expressed great delight in seeing their numerous reflections in the carefully placed mirrors. Enrichment is exceptionally good. Children benefit from exciting activities provided by visits or visitors to school, for example, to create a Diwali tapestry.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

All parents agree that the nursery is a very caring, happy and supportive place for their children, and one wrote, 'From the moment I went in I knew how lucky I would be for my daughter to go there – in a safe, secure and caring environment'.

Exceptional efforts are made to promote healthy and safe activities, such as 'Fit for Learning', as well as rigorously identifying and reducing potential risks. Child protection and staff vetting procedures are extremely robust and effective. Staff are excellent at supporting and challenging children in both their academic and personal development. Assessment information is used exceptionally well to track children's progress and set challenging targets to help them improve. Individual needs are especially well provided for, enabling all children to make rapid progress which is evident in the standard of their work. The excellent partnership with parents through the Family Partnership Centre makes parents feel welcome and valued. This, together with the Nurture Nursery, helps prepare children exceptionally well for entry to the nursery school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

This outstanding nursery is led by an inspirational headteacher. Her commitment, shared by the excellent staff team, has led to a vision of achieving the highest standards possible for the children. The teamwork is outstanding and means that children are fully involved in all learning activities and receive the highest levels of care. The nursery works exceptionally well with parents and other agencies to help support children's education and welfare. As one parent wrote, 'They are all very approachable and always willing to discuss anything I may wish to know'.

The evaluation of the nursery's performance is extremely accurate. It is brought about by a very thorough monitoring system fully involving a committed and very effective group of governors. Even though the nursery is not always able to keep the governing body at full strength, this has not inhibited either the outstanding performance that it achieves or the considerable improvement to the accommodation over the past few years. Excellent monitoring systems have helped ensure the nursery has been outstandingly successful in raising the achievement of children in an inclusive environment. The management of resources is exemplary. Outdoor facilities are outstanding and used to full effect so that they complement the extremely well-managed teaching and learning areas.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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.

Annex A

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	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

Thank you for welcoming us to your nursery and talking to us about your activities. You and your parents think your nursery is a very special place to be. We agree with you and think that your nursery is excellent.

- This is what we thought was especially good.
- You have an excellent headteacher and other staff and governors support her very well to give you the very best education they can.
- You love coming to nursery and you work very hard there so you make excellent progress and do very much better than most children of your age.
- Your behaviour is excellent. You get on very well with staff and other children and you are very good at helping staff, particularly in tidying things away.
- The buildings and outdoor area are excellent. Staff plan very exciting things for you to do and they help and encourage you to do your very best.
- Adults take especially good care of you so you and your parents know that you are safe and very well looked after.
- Staff keep a very good check on how well you are doing so that they can give you extra help if you need it.

Your nursery is always looking at ways to help you do even better and staff recognise that they could do even more to help you learn the sounds that letters make. We have asked them to carry on helping you in this.

I am so pleased that you enjoy nursery and are doing so well there and I hope you keep on doing your very best.