



The Boston Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 126564
Local Authority LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number 293589
Inspection dates 15–16 February 2007
Reporting inspector Joanne Harvey

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Church Road
School category	Maintained		Boston
Age range of pupils	3–4		Lincolnshire PE21 0LJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01205358647
Number on roll (school)	75	Fax number	01205356741
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Kate Buckley
		Headteacher	Mrs Heather Steed
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2002		

Age group 3–4	Inspection dates 15–16 February 2007	Inspection number 293589
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average size school. It is situated in the docklands area of Boston but serves a wide area of the town, including areas of social and economic disadvantage. Children come to the nursery with much lower levels of knowledge, skills and understanding than most children of a similar age, and very often with exceptionally low levels of speech and language skills. There are an average number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities and currently no children have a statement of special educational need. Most children are White British, but there are a high number of children attending the nursery who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.

The school has achieved a Basic Skills Quality Mark.

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 and highly effective nursery school giving excellent value for money. It was considered to be an effective school at the time of the last inspection and it has continued to flourish and develop since then. The school's success arises from highly effective leadership from an outstanding headteacher, supported by committed governors and an able and hardworking staff team, who together ensure that the needs of children and their families are at the centre of all that they do. They really do achieve their stated aim to help children 'take GIANT steps into a world of wonder, imagination, knowledge and understanding.' Therefore, children thrive and become very well rounded individuals. As a result, their progress and achievement are extremely rapid, from very low starting points, they reach and some surpass the standards expected for their age.

This is certainly a very happy and harmonious school. Because children are encouraged to express their opinions and to accept increasing responsibilities, they grow in confidence and their personal development is outstanding. They are equipped well for the next stage of their education and the choices they will have to make about their lives. It is no surprise that parents are highly supportive of the school. One wrote: 'In my opinion they are wonderful with all of the children, encouraging them to be independent and confident yet giving support when needed. The staff really seem to care, and it shows. They deserve a tick and a gold star!'

Teaching and learning are excellent because teachers have exceptional knowledge and understanding of how children learn. They carefully plan lessons which take children's learning forward from whatever level they have reached previously. They provide stimulating and enjoyable structured or play activities which fully involve children in their own learning, bring lessons alive and develop very positive attitudes. Children who find learning difficult and those who are in the early stages of learning English get outstanding support so that they make excellent progress.

The impact of leadership and management is outstanding because the headteacher employs rigorous procedures for checking the work of the school and focussing resources very carefully where they are needed most. She ensures a shared vision for the school and a commitment to continuous improvement from all staff and governors so that, good as the school is, there is no complacency. The school gathers and uses particularly high quality information about how well the children are doing in their personal and social development, their language and literacy skills and their mathematical understanding. Senior leaders do not have such a clear picture of children's progress in other areas of learning.

The success the school has had in the past, and its determination to do even better, mean that the capacity for sustained and further improvement is great.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure senior leaders gather and use high quality information about how well children make progress in all areas of their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children achieve extremely well. When they start at the nursery, most children have much lower levels of knowledge, skills and understanding than is usual for their age. Aspects of their English skills are particularly low. The school has a proven track record of ensuring that children consistently make at least good and very often exceptional progress in all areas of the curriculum. Consequently, by the time they leave the nursery, many have caught up with other children of a similar age nationally, and some are doing even better than expected at this age. Children who are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties or disabilities also make exceptional progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development is outstanding. Children's happiness and enjoyment is in no doubt. When asked how they feel on the days they come to nursery one child said, 'When I wake up I smile.' This positive attitude begins from the moment they start at the nursery where freedom to learn is extremely well promoted, as is spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Care is taken to help children think positively about themselves, others in school and people from other cultures and as a result, children show respect for themselves and for others. They learn to share, take turns, and cope with their emotions, and they develop a good sense of right and wrong. Lunches are calm times when conversations flow. Early on, children develop independence and confidence to make choices, including about how to keep safe. This prepares them well for their lives in and out of school both now and in the future. Children develop a good understanding of healthy lifestyles because of the school's keen promotion of healthy eating and physical activity. Attendance is effective, though ensuring all pupils attend regularly remains a high priority.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching is outstanding. Very good relationships provide a supportive yet challenging environment for learning. Adults have high expectations of children so that they are attentive, rarely passive and respond quickly to instructions. Stimulating lessons contribute significantly to children's extremely good progress. Assessment information is used effectively to plan work that challenges pupils of all abilities. Teachers use their very good knowledge and understanding of how children learn to ensure a variety of tasks which motivate, encourage and include them all. This includes the improving use of computers to help learning. The children have so much fun they do not realise that adults' careful questioning challenges them to think and work really hard. Teaching

assistants contribute fully to planning and assessment across school. Everyone is involved in the very effective support given to children who have additional learning needs. As a result these children make extremely good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. Great care is taken to ensure a beguiling range of well resourced activities which simulate, promote and develop children's learning. The indoor and outdoor activities and resources inspire a sense of awe and wonder in the children. The range of activities, led by an adult or based on play, ensures that all areas of learning are covered well and learning is enriched in many ways. Circle and story times extend children's vocabulary and promote a real love of learning. Good use is made of the local environment and links with local business and public service partners. Visitors to the school, such as bell ringers, a jazz band and a tractor on loan, add creative and real life experiences. These activities help children discover their tastes and talents and develop important personal skills. All children have full access to a curriculum that stimulates them to learn.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Standards of care are outstanding. Staff get to know children and families very well and are extremely quick to respond to any worries. Great emphasis is placed on the personal, social and emotional development of each child. Therefore children separate well from their carers and settle in to nursery life very quickly. Children who have learning difficulties or disabilities and those who are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language are very well supported and do extremely well. Child protection and safeguarding arrangements are thorough. Teachers know exactly what the next stages of learning are and use assessment well to plan these at the right level for all children. Systems for measuring how well children are progressing have developed well since the last inspection, particularly in language and literacy, mathematics and personal, social and emotional development. They are not yet developed to the same high standard in the other areas of learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. There is a proven track record of maintaining standards whilst continuing to make improvements, giving every confidence that the school can develop still further from here. Teamwork is exemplary, as seen for example in the excellent and varied contribution made to the school as a whole by teaching assistants and the home visitor. The school's self-evaluation is developing well. Increasingly effective systems provide detailed information about how well all children are doing, particularly in language and literacy, mathematics and personal, social and emotional development. Information is not yet of such high quality for other

areas of learning. Resources are used extremely well and response to children's changing needs is quick. Governors have a clear understanding of the school and its development and hold it accountable.

The headteacher makes an outstanding contribution, particularly through her work to promote partnerships which greatly enhance provision for children and their families. These include The Children's Centre Network and The Boston Children and Families Partnerships. Parents take advantage of the many learning opportunities made available to them including Peers Early Education Partnership (PEEPS), 'Keeping up with the Children' and other family learning courses.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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 effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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	3
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

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	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	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

17 February 2007

Dear Children

The Boston Nursery School, Church Road, Boston, Lincolnshire, PE1 0LJ

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to visit your nursery recently. This letter is to tell you what I thought about it.

I think you are very lucky to go to such a wonderful nursery school. I saw you having so much fun and doing lots of exciting things. You are very well behaved and everyone gets on well together. I saw you all working and playing hard in classes, having lunch together quietly and sensibly and playing and working outside too. Because all the grown ups work very hard and look after you so well, you do very well with your learning and you become very nice people too!

Everyone at nursery is very keen to make it as good as it can be. The adults know exactly how well you are doing in your language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social skills. To make the nursery even better I have asked them to check as carefully how well you are learning in other areas too.

I am sure Mrs Steed and the other staff will go on working hard to make the school an exciting and interesting place. You can do your bit by continuing with your excellent behaviour and hard work.

Joanne Harvey

Lead Inspector