

# West Heath Nursery School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 103127          |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Birmingham      |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 308229          |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 17 January 2008 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Usha Devi HMI   |

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>                | 3-4  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed  |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |  |
| School                                    | 72   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Diane Clayton  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | J A Burch  |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 25 April 2005  |
| <b>School address</b>                     | 200 West Heath Road<br>Northfield<br>Birmingham<br>B31 3HB |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01214 752672   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01214 765257   |

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| <b>Age group</b>         | 3-4             |
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

West Heath Nursery School is situated in a residential area in South West Birmingham. It has out of school care facilities within the school premises. Children start at the Nursery in the term after their third birthday. Over half of the children attend full time; the others attend either morning or afternoon sessions. The majority of children are White British with a small number from other ethnic groups. A small proportion of children speak English as an additional language. The number of children identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. In recognition of its work, the school has received the Quality Mark.

## 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 where staff have a detailed understanding of the personal needs of the children and ensure the children feel safe and secure in this harmonious environment. As a result, children, parents and carers value the good level of care, guidance and support the school offers. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher works successfully with teachers and support staff to secure a calm and purposeful atmosphere where children achieve well and develop good personal and social skills. Members of the governing body are supportive and provide satisfactory support. Some governors have started to check aspects of the school's work. However, the governing body does not take a sufficiently proactive role in monitoring and evaluation in all areas. In contrast, teachers and support staff frequently work in partnership to monitor and evaluate the work of the school. As a result, they have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. This, coupled with good improvement since the last inspection, points to good capacity for further improvement.

On entry to the Nursery, children's skills, knowledge and understanding are below expectations in all six areas of learning. Children make good gains because of good teaching. By the time they leave the school, their attainment is broadly in line with what is typical for children of this age. Progress accelerates when staff set tasks and ask questions that reinforce and extend children's spoken language and mathematical skills in a range of contexts. For example, during the inspection, staff worked with a group of children and asked them to act out the story of the Billy Goats Gruff. As the children took on the different roles, staff helped them to count, order numbers and use appropriate words to communicate their ideas. However, this practice is inconsistent and staff occasionally miss the opportunity to reinforce and extend these important skills. The more able children make good progress because of the targeted support they receive. Nevertheless, the school is aware that their progress could be further accelerated during the day-to-day teaching sessions. During some lessons, the progress the more able children make is not as fast as it could be because the activities they are given do not always extend and challenge their thinking.

The well planned curriculum covers all six areas of learning and gives children the opportunity to learn through practical experiences. The school uses a good range of visitors to enhance the curriculum. During the environment week, for instance, children work with local rangers to take part in gardening activities and learn about mini-beasts and insects. Most recently, the school has introduced simple sign language. The children have responded to this with enthusiasm and it is having a positive impact on their progress and attitude to learning. During the inspection, one child demonstrated her ability to use sign language with confidence and commented, 'This is fun and helps me to learn.' The personal development of the children is good. The 'Life Education Bus' visits the school regularly and helps the children to learn about the importance of keeping healthy in a fun and imaginative way. Consequently, they are developing a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. The children have a secure awareness of the world of the work and the types of jobs people do because the school works successfully with the local postal worker, fire fighters, library and shops.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

As a Nursery school, the Foundation Stage is completely covered by the Overall Effectiveness section.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Build on existing good practice and ensure that all staff provide opportunities for children to reinforce and extend their spoken language and mathematical skills.
- Increase the challenge in lessons by ensuring activities are differentiated to better meet the needs of the more able children.
- Ensure governors are more fully involved in monitoring the work of the school and evaluating the impact of actions identified in the school improvement plan.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

The children make good progress in all areas of learning because of good teaching and targeted support. When they leave the Nursery, they have skills that are broadly in line with those expected on entry to the Reception Year. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because the support and care they receive is very effective. The school also works closely with external agencies to give children with specific developmental or academic needs appropriate levels of additional support. The school's recent focus on increasing the rate of progress made by boys has been successful. Boys and girls now achieve equally well because the staff plan activities that effectively meet the children's varying interests and styles of learning.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Children enjoy coming to school and taking part in the wide range of activities provided in the outdoor and indoor environment. Attendance is good. The children respond positively to the high expectations of behaviour that the adults set for them. They work safely, treat each other with respect, take turns and listen carefully during group activities. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stage in their education. Children grow in confidence because the school encourages them to make choices and learn through new experiences. The children make a valuable contribution to the community by raising money for local and national charities. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school recognises that there is scope to extend the opportunities the children have to discuss, review and plan activities so that they can take greater responsibility for their learning.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers plan and provide children with tasks that enable them to make good progress. Children learn in a variety of ways, make choices, and engage in new learning experiences because of the wide range of activities. When staff ask questions and set tasks that extend literacy and mathematical knowledge and develop their ideas, children's progress accelerates. Relationships between children and staff are positive. One parent reflecting the views of many wrote, 'Everyone is so friendly; staff are very helpful and approachable.' Teachers have a good knowledge of the children and make appropriate use of assessment information to plan tasks that meet the needs of most learners. However, on occasions, the work they set for the more able is not sufficiently

challenging. Support staff are fully involved in all aspects of the school day and make an effective contribution to children's learning and development.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Children are motivated to learn because staff have a good understanding of how young children learn. Practical 'hands-on' activities successfully capture the children's imagination and promote creativity. The outside environment is well organised and staff ensure children have good access to activities during the school day. Regular visitors, such as the local road safety officers and peripatetic music teachers, enhance the curriculum. Children use and apply their information and communication technology skills with confidence. This is because they have regular access to computers and the interactive whiteboard to support their learning. While there are very good opportunities for children to develop their writing skills, staff sometimes miss opportunities to extend children's spoken language and mathematical skills. There is good provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Children receive a positive start to their school life because of effective induction procedures and good links with parents. As one parent commented, 'The settling in period for the children is very good because the school meets each child's needs.' Children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve well and reach their targets because they receive good academic guidance. Through regular monitoring, staff identify children's strengths and areas for development, and check progress towards learning targets. Staff use this information effectively to provide extra support individually and in small groups. The school has identified that the more able children are not always given academic guidance tailored carefully enough to their needs. It has put in place plans to improve this. Child protection procedures, risk assessments for school visits and procedures for monitoring the health and safety of the children are in place.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides good leadership. She has high expectations and places a strong emphasis on accelerating the progress made by all children. Teachers and support staff provide the headteacher with a good level of assistance. The headteacher regularly monitors the progress of children and uses this information well to identify gaps in provision and introduce new ways of working. This is having a beneficial impact on the progress that children make. The senior staff lead their areas of responsibility well. They provide colleagues with useful guidance to help them improve their practice. School self-evaluation is good and accurately informs the school improvement plan. However, the school has not prioritised the actions it will take to secure the necessary improvements. On occasions, the school improvement plan does not make clear the link between the intended actions and the expected impact on children's progress or the quality of provision. Governors are supportive of the work of the school but have not been much involved in evaluating its effectiveness.

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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 | 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? | 2   |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection  | Yes |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?   | 2   |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage   | 2   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 2   |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve?  | 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

|   |   |
|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?                                  | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 2 |
| The attendance of learners  | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 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?          | 2 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 2 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 2 |

<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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 2   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 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**

Dear Children

Inspection of West Heath Nursery, Birmingham, B31 3HB

Thank you for making us feel welcome when we visited your Nursery. We liked talking to you about your work and meeting some of your mums, dads and grandparents. Thank you for telling us about all the different things you like to do and for showing us how to use simple sign language. We think that you go to a good Nursery.

There are many great things about your Nursery.

- You behave well and are kind to each other.
- The teachers and all the adults who work with you help you to make good progress.
- You are good at sharing equipment and know how to take turns.
- Everybody takes good care of you and this helps you to feel safe and happy.
- There are lots of interesting things for you to do both inside and outside.

These are the things we have asked the headteacher and staff to do to make your school even better.

- Give you more opportunities to talk about your ideas and practise your mathematical skills.
- Give some of you activities that will challenge you and make you think even harder.

We have also asked the governors to help the school more with checking that everything is always as good as it can be in all areas.

We hope that you will help the staff and governors by always doing your best.

We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Usha Devi Her Majesty's Inspector