

# Millfields Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104138
<b>Local Authority</b>	Walsall
<b>Inspection number</b>	308523
<b>Inspection date</b>	21 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lois Furness

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>	3-4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	96
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	George Jevons
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lynda Myatt
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 November 2004
<b>School address</b>	Lichfield Road Bloxwich Walsall WS3 3LU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01922 714830
<b>Fax number</b>	01922 405136

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

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the standards attained and children's achievement; the use of assessment information and efficiency in tracking children's progress; and how well leadership and management promote improvement. Evidence was gathered from observations, discussions and assessments. Discussions took place with senior leaders, other staff, the chair of governors and children. Parents' responses to the Ofsted questionnaire were also analysed. Other aspects of the school's work were not inspected in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included in this report.

## Description of the school

Millfields Nursery School caters for children from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. Children are admitted to the school following their third birthday. They attend for a period of up to six terms, attending either morning or afternoon sessions. The school has the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Investors in People and the gold standards for 'You can do it!' Housed in the same building and sharing facilities is the Neighbourhood Nursery. This provides full-day registered childcare for 0 to four-year-olds, wrap-around care for children who attend the Nursery School, and a play scheme for children from three to eight years of age.

## 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 school provides children with an excellent start to their education. There are significant strengths, including the inspirational leadership of the headteacher and children's outstanding personal development, that reflect the excellent quality of care, guidance and support children receive. This view is borne out by parents, who are delighted with the school's work. Comments such as, 'This is a first-class Nursery School' and 'The enriching environment alongside the dedication of committed staff is what makes Millfields special', indicate the high level of satisfaction.

Most children start school with skills that are typical for their age. By the time they leave, the majority attain standards that are well above those expected in all areas of learning. Children are very well prepared for the next stage of education, both academically and socially. Achievement is outstanding as a result of the excellent quality of teaching they receive. All staff have a very clear understanding of how these young children learn. They are committed to doing the very best for the children in their care and to make sure they deliver an exciting curriculum in a caring and stimulating environment. The curriculum is carefully planned to stimulate children's imagination and to develop their language, communication and problem-solving skills. It is enriched effectively by a wide programme of visits and visitors, such as an artist in residence, which strengthens children's personal development very well.

The atmosphere in school is calm and purposeful. Children's attendance is satisfactory and as soon as they enter they immediately settle to what is provided. Happy, smiling faces are seen everywhere. This is because children feel safe and learning is enjoyable. Staff are very careful to extend children's interests wherever possible. For example as a result of staff observing children talking about, and playing 'castles', they set up a castle role-play area. This captured the children's imagination, and provided a valuable resource to maximise their learning. The very good opportunities for inside and outdoor learning ensure that children's learning preferences are considered carefully. Teaching meets the needs of all children very effectively, and those who find learning difficult or who are upset, for whatever reason, are very sensitively supported by the staff. There is a very good balance between activities led by an adult and those that children choose for themselves. Joining the 'train' is seen to be great fun as children 'chug' from 'station' to 'station' to check what exciting activities are available today. As a result, children discover that learning is an exciting activity that comes from a range of stimulating experiences. Children develop a good understanding of the need to keep healthy as they eagerly eat fruit and wholemeal toast during their chosen snack time. Children are clear about what is expected of them, and so their behaviour is excellent and they know how to play safely with each other. Cooperation is very good as children willingly share equipment and listen to each other's ideas. They are developing a very good understanding of the importance of working together in a community. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They clearly understand about right and wrong and respond very well to the school's rules and routines.

The leadership and management of the school are also outstanding. The headteacher successfully motivates staff and has extremely high expectations. The acquisition of a range of quality awards is testimony to the first-class education provided for children. Teamwork is exceptional. Everyone gives of their best, ensuring that new ideas and initiatives are put into practice, so helping to sustain the cycle of continuous improvement. Governors are very effective and know the school well. They take an active role in monitoring and evaluation, which shows very good

improvement from the previous inspection. The school is rigorous in its analysis of itself and of children's progress. A detailed tracking system is in place which enables the leadership to check regularly if all children are progressing as well as they should. However, this school is never complacent and has identified the need to make this system more efficient. This need has resulted in a new system being recently introduced which allows the school to more quickly and thoroughly analyse information, and which supports staff in identifying accurately next steps of learning.

The Nursery has built up very positive links with parents. Home visits are popular with families and enable staff to know individual children well before they enter the school. The very good links with the Neighbourhood Nursery mean that transition is seamless. Children are very familiar with the school setting as there are regular opportunities provided for the children of both nurseries to work and play together. Links with the local Academy are also very good and students from the Academy frequently work within the setting. The high quality of education identified in the previous inspection has been maintained, and very good improvements made, particularly in the role of governors and the use of information and communication technology. The school's capacity to improve further is very good indeed.

### **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

#### **Grade: 1**

As a nursery school, the Foundation Stage is covered by the 'Overall Effectiveness' section above.

#### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Embed the recently introduced system for tracking children's progress and identifying the next steps of learning.

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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
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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
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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

<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>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

23 February 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Millfields Nursery School, Walsall WS3 3LU

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to visit a few days ago. I had a lovely time and your happy smiling faces showed me that you really enjoy coming to your nursery. You were doing lots of interesting things and I can see why you enjoy the activities so much. I think your school is outstanding, which means it is very, very good indeed. These are some of the things I found out.

- I agree with your parents, who wrote to me to say that Millfields is special and that it looks after you extremely well.
- All the staff work really hard to make sure you all learn as well as you can, so you are all doing very well – much better than other children of your age.
- You feel safe at nursery, have great fun and enjoy what you do.
- Your behaviour is very good and you try very hard to help each other.
- Teaching is very good and staff plan lots of interesting things for you to do. If something particularly interests you, like the castle, they try hard to make it even more exciting.
- You get lots of opportunities to work and play with adults and choose for yourself what you are going to do, both in the classroom or in the outdoor area.
- You try to eat healthily and enjoy your daily snack time.
- Those of you who sometimes find learning hard or who are upset are looked after carefully by staff and are brought into the activities.

Your headteacher leads the school very well and all the staff and governors are working very hard to make things even better for you. They check regularly that you are all learning as well as you can. Because they are so good at this, they have found out that there is something they could use to make it easier for them to check your learning and to help staff to plan what to do next to help you learn even more. I think this is a very good idea.

Thank you for making my visit such a happy time.

Best wishes

Lois Furness Lead inspector

23 February 2008

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Lois Furness  
Lead inspector