

# The Limes Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108905
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bristol, City of
<b>Inspection number</b>	309833
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Burghart

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	107
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Clare Beckell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Heather Churchill
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 November 2004
<b>School address</b>	Johnsons Road Whitehall Bristol BS5 9AT
<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 9030317
<b>Fax number</b>	0117 3772364

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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, in doing so, investigated the following issues:

the match between children's achievement and the quality of teaching

the impact of governors on the school's leadership and management

the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation.

Discussions took place with the headteacher, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own views, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This nursery takes children from a wide area and a variety of backgrounds. A few children attend full time, but most children attend part time, mornings or afternoons. About half come from minority ethnic groups, mostly of Indian and Pakistani heritage. Many of these children do not speak English as their first language at home. As a proportion, this is above average. The proportion of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school was recently designated as a children's centre and from the end of term will be offering full wrap around care and support throughout the year. An extensive programme of building work was nearing completion during the inspection.

## 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 school where children are extremely happy. It has the overwhelming support of parents and is an exceedingly popular part of the local community. 'A fantastic nursery!', 'A great introduction to school life' and 'A wonderful place for children to be!' are just a few of the many glowing parental comments. There are outstanding features in children's personal development, the way all children regardless of their backgrounds or abilities are included in all activities, and the excellent curriculum on offer.

Although there is a range, children start school with skills below those generally expected of the age group. This is especially so in terms of personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. Children achieve well and make good progress overall. They reach standards that are broadly in line with what is expected by the end of the Nursery and are well prepared for the infant school.

Progress is outstanding in personal development with children readily taking turns, sharing and showing high levels of consideration to other people. This is very much a reflection on the school's high quality pastoral and good academic care. Staff know children and their families particularly well and give much valued advice and support to all concerned. Teachers keep detailed records of children's involvement and performance and use these successfully to plan future activities. The innovative learning diaries completed by staff and parents in conjunction with children form excellent records of how children are doing. Relationships are outstanding. Children feel safe in the knowledge that they can trust staff and even at this young age have a good understanding of what will make them healthy. The school's drive to develop independence and raise children's self-esteem really works, with children continually growing in confidence and being prepared to have a go at everything. Children respond particularly well to opportunities to make choices and plan what they will be doing during the day. Behaviour, despite a few hiccups which are understandable at this stage of development, is outstanding. Pupils are learning to understand their own feelings and appreciate that what they do affects others.

Progress in developing communication, language and literacy skills is good. However, as a result of a lack of confidence in expressing themselves, boys make less progress than girls do, and overall standards are still below what are expected nationally when children leave the nursery. There are positive signs in children choosing to be involved in reading and, to a lesser extent, writing activities, and in emerging basic skills such as letter recognition. Children are learning to listen and concentrate. Staff are adept at interacting with children no matter what they are doing. Role play in the kitchen area, experimenting with who likes to eat what, was a real treat! Teachers and their nursery nurse colleagues successfully encourage children to express their feelings. This works very well in terms of support for those with learning difficulties and the few with disabilities, and is especially effective in helping those for whom English is an additional language to develop communication skills. The school makes very good use of children's varied ethnic backgrounds to help everyone begin to appreciate different customs and lifestyles. It offers parents outstanding support to help them understand how their children are being helped to learn. Children are making good progress in mathematical development, learning to count, sort by shape, colour and size, and appreciate comparisons such as bigger and heavier. Spontaneous measurement of the class sunflower plants was not only fun but used by staff to get children to estimate, use a tape measure and appreciate their own size. Physical development is a strength, with children learning to control and extend what their bodies are capable of.

Children use fine skills, such as painting and play dough modelling, and develop their motor skills by riding, balancing and climbing. Staff make sure all children benefit from the very good outdoor space and resources during all weathers.

Teaching is good. There is a strong commitment to learning through play and curriculum planning is excellent. This very successfully helps children to develop their horizons in terms of knowledge and understanding of the world and how they can represent and record what they see creatively. For example, children made careful observations of leaves and insects before combining colours to paint what they had seen. They much enjoyed 'fishing' to explore what magnets can do. Rhymes, singing and making sounds with instruments reinforce counting and memory skills as well as promoting a joy of music. Information and communication technology skills are better than expected at this age because children have lots of opportunities to learn while using computers, and staff set a good example in their use of the interactive whiteboards. School records and inspection evidence show that there are instances where teaching is less effective, most notably when staff do not use open-ended questioning to prompt children to respond and where some children on the edge of groups are not sufficiently drawn into activities. The school is aware of this and has effectively supported teachers in ways that have led to improvement.

Leadership and management are good. The school is well run on a day to day basis and has excellent links with parents and the community. There are outstanding features in the headteacher's leadership which make sure the school has clear educational direction and sets itself exacting targets. There is a smooth move towards the new children's centre, whilst ensuring that current provision remains effective. The headteacher is well supported by senior leaders. Between them, they have successfully evaluated the school's strengths and areas for development, and this underpins the good capacity to improve. However, there is a mismatch between the text and judgements of some sections of the school's record of its self-evaluation which indicates the need for more rigorous monitoring. Governors appreciate that they do not have sufficient first hand information to ensure consistency and determine the impact of their decisions on children's achievement. They have not checked that all statutory requirements, for example with regard to the central record of safeguarding arrangements, are fully in place. Consequently, governance overall is judged as satisfactory rather than good. Nevertheless, governors are supportive of the school and their management of finance and building matters is strong.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

As the school only has children aged 3 to 4 there is no requirement to complete this section. The report covers, in full, the Foundation Stage.

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

- Improve the ways in which governors monitor and evaluate the school's effectiveness.
- Improve the rates at which boys make progress, especially with regard to communication, language and literacy skills.

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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?	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?	1
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?	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	2
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	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?	1
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	1
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

18 July 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of The Limes Nursery School, Bristol BS5 9AT

I know that you might need some help to read my letter, but I am sure that someone, perhaps your teachers or your parents, will help you understand the good things I have to say.

Thank you for your warm welcome when I came to visit your school. I was very pleased to see how well you behave and how careful you are near where the builders are working. Yours is a good school. It makes sure you enjoy learning.

Here are some of the highlights:

- You have plenty of interesting activities to do indoors and outside and are learning how to make your own choices.
- You are being helped to grow into sensible young people.
- You are happy to be at school and feel safe because staff take really good care of all of you, especially those who need extra help.
- Staff are good at helping you to do your best and make sure that all of you are included in all activities.
- The school is extremely good at helping those of you who speak languages other than English at home to learn.
- Links with parents are excellent. The school is extremely popular.
- The school is well run. The headteacher knows what works well and how things can be improved.

In order to be even better, the school should:

- help boys to make more progress in learning how to communicate
- make sure governors have ways of finding out for themselves how the school is doing.

Keep having fun!

Yours sincerely

Mike Burghart Lead inspector