

# Maidenhead Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109756
<b>Local Authority</b>	Windsor and Maidenhead
<b>Inspection number</b>	310087
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sean O'Toole

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>	3-5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	60
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Maria Evans
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Margaret Brett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 January 2004
<b>School address</b>	School Lane Maidenhead SL6 7PG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01628 623 551
<b>Fax number</b>	01628 623 551

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated how well boys and girls of different abilities and backgrounds make progress. The inspector focused on how well children develop personal, social and emotional skills and become equipped as effective learners. He also looked at the ways in which leaders and managers help to improve the school especially the quality of teaching. Evidence was gathered from the analysis of children's work, teachers' assessments, observation of lessons, parents' questionnaires, and discussions with the headteacher, governors, parents and children. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail.

## Description of the school

Maidenhead Nursery School draws its children from a wide area and a range of backgrounds. Most have White British heritage, about a quarter have Pakistani backgrounds and a few come from other minority ethnic groups. A few have learning difficulties and disabilities that include hearing and sight impairment, behavioural problems and weaknesses in communication.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

One of the successes of the school is the way that staff look carefully at the needs and experiences of the children and draw on their ideas for planning the curriculum. This approach helps children to become keen and highly motivated learners, because they feel valued. As one parent wrote, 'The children learn a lot without compromising on having fun and playing.' Consequently, children of all abilities thrive in their personal, social and emotional development and achieve well in all of the areas of learning. By the time they leave the school, they are working at levels that are in advance of those expected for their age.

Underpinning the children's success is the strong focus on care, support and guidance. The adults have excellent knowledge of each child and make regular observations of progress. They use this information effectively to plan the next steps in learning. Parents are delighted by the individual attention their children receive, and the comfortable, interesting and safe environment in which they learn. As one said, 'This is a fun-loving, caring place to explore and learn creatively.' The introduction of more structured learning of letters and sounds for older children has not reduced the children's fun and has brought improved standards in communication, language and literacy. The school recognises the need to extend some activities in using numbers to capitalise on the boys' interest and to link this with some aspects of early recording.

Vulnerable children, such as those with physical disabilities and underdeveloped speech, benefit from high levels of support that enables them to join in all of the activities. Those new to learning English also gain much from the creative curriculum that gives them opportunities to take part in imaginative play and to learn new words alongside their friends. Staff plan and prepare thoroughly and keep parents very well informed about their children's academic and personal progress. They also make sure that activities provide interest and challenge. The good teaching achieves a successful balance between working with groups and individuals and allowing opportunities for the children to explore and investigate. High quality relationships and an emphasis on praise and encouragement give the children the confidence to try new challenges.

Actions taken by leaders and governors are driven by their ambition to see the children succeed. The enthusiastic headteacher is supported well by colleagues who are keen to improve their skills participating regularly in training. Governors keep a check on the school's work and are frequent visitors. The school is good at judging its performance and uses the information from observations of the children to make sure that the curriculum is matched to their needs. The useful school development plan highlights priorities for the year but does not contain longer-term goals. The criteria used to measure how well the school is meeting its targets are not sharp enough. Nonetheless, leaders and managers are always looking for ways to improve the provision. One recent success has been the way in which staff have extended their work on assessing the children when they first start school.

The children are at ease in the school and work happily together. Their excellent behaviour and very positive attitudes contribute much to the school's positive ethos. They respect and like the adults working with them and are keen to please. Children are very interested in the world around them and several spoke about how much they enjoy learning. Staff have made good use of the children's high levels of interest in the building work. Children have been involved in monitoring the builders' progress. They have relished the opportunity of pretending to be builders and skilfully recorded their work using digital cameras. This type of activity combined

with regular opportunities to practise basic skills, especially in using information and communication technology, equips the children effectively for the next stage of their education. These skills are enhanced through the daily social activities, including making choices about healthy foods and drinks and opportunities to share lunch together. One parent captured the essence of the school in the following words, 'The nurturing and creative environment encourages growth for little people in so many ways.' This is indeed a good school that serves its children well.

## **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**

- Provide additional opportunities, especially for boys, to use their number and mathematical skills more widely particularly to raise their confidence in early recording.
- Sharpen up the development plan by having more focused ways to check on success and to include strategic and longer-term priorities.

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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	2
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	2
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	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?	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>	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	2
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

28 March 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Maidenhead Nursery School, Maidenhead, SL6 7PG

I enjoyed visiting you at the Nursery. Thank you for making me feel so welcome and for inviting me to play with you. It was lovely to see how well you get on with each other. Lots of you talked to me and told me that you like coming to school. It was good to see how hard you work and how well you share things. I was very impressed by how well you balanced on the climbing frame and how carefully many of you wrote your names and told stories. I know that your mums and dads really like your school and some of them said they wished they were children so that they could come too!

There are lots of good things about your school.

- The adults look after you very well.
- You know how to be kind and thoughtful, and are really good at helping everyone.
- The older children are very good at looking after the little ones.
- You help to make the school a very happy and caring place.
- The adults are good at helping you to learn.

You can help to make the school even better by trying even harder when you are learning numbers. I have asked the adults to find more ways to check how well the school is doing and to think a bit more about plans for the future.

It was lovely to meet you all and I hope that you always enjoy school as much as you do at Maidenhead Nursery.

Best wishes

Sean O'Toole

Lead Inspector