

# Oxclose Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113973
<b>Local Authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	311435
<b>Inspection date</b>	9 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Shepherd

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	78
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Brian Ogden
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Jayne Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 April 2005
<b>School address</b>	Oxclose Crescent Spennymoor County Durham DL16 6RU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01388 814970
<b>Fax number</b>	01388 814970

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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 the following issues: the achievement of more able children and of boys; the organisation of the indoor and outdoor curriculum; the impact of leadership and management in creating an effective teaching team and in providing productive assessment. Evidence was gathered from the observation of sessions both indoors and outdoors, an assembly, and the breakfast and lunchtime arrangements. Discussions were held with children, staff and governors. A scrutiny was carried out of children's records, assessment and tracking systems, key documents and data, which included the school's self-evaluation. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the majority of the school's own judgements, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

The Nursery serves an area with some social and economic disadvantages. It is situated on the same site as a primary school. Children are predominantly of White British heritage. Children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis, with attendance ranging between three and five terms.

## 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 Nursery which provides a calm and purposeful context for learning. Its key strengths are the very high quality leadership and management of the headteacher, together with the dedicated teams of staff and governors. They are all committed to a shared vision and have a clear sense of purpose of providing the highest quality provision for each and every child. Parents are extremely appreciative of the Nursery. Typical comments range from, 'This Nursery is a wonderful place for a child to be,' to 'I can see a huge improvement in her development.'

The headteacher has an extremely clear vision of the importance of evaluating provision and continually striving to extend every opportunity for children to learn to their optimum. She sets a high priority in challenging each child to achieve his or her potential. Children enter the Nursery with skills that are lower than expected for their age. They leave with standards that are higher than expected. This represents excellent progress over time. Achievement is outstanding. This is due to the detailed analysis the Nursery carries out of the careful tracking of individual children's progress each term. A typical outcome of this evaluation is the identification of more able children making slower progress than other children. The Nursery then introduced well focused sessions for these children in language and numeracy. The outcome is that these children now make excellent progress. They are already reaching levels that are expected at the end of Reception. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make equally outstanding progress. Children receive individual support to develop basic skills and they gain great confidence from these carefully planned sessions.

The monitoring of teaching is very detailed and, together with well focused staff training, results in excellent teaching and learning. The teaching team work extremely well together. Every member of staff has a very clear understanding of the key activities for the week and their role in making sure that learning is at the heart of those activities. Staff are highly skilled in responding to children's own choices and responses. They use questioning very effectively to extend children's thinking still further. The organisation of a focused activity, led by a different member of staff each day works extremely well and results in high quality outcomes. Although some of the focused adult-led activities are organised outdoors, the balance over a week tends to be more indoors. The school is in a very good position to provide more of them in the outdoors in order to ensure more children voluntarily choose this focused learning. The organisation and use of the daily assessment through observations works extremely well. This, together with the headteacher's detailed analysis of the data produced from the observations, ensures that future learning matches children's specific needs very closely.

The organisation of the teaching sessions is very carefully balanced. The strategy of children working with a key member of staff at the beginning of sessions works extremely well. Children begin their daily learning in a secure setting, where staff skilfully combine teaching new skills with responding to what the children want to talk about themselves. The predominant amount of time spent in independent learning is combined skilfully with whole Nursery sessions such as snack time, where children get together to eat and drink as one big community. Across all of the different types of organisation there is a strong emphasis on personal development. Staff have high quality relationships with each other and with the children. These features, combined with the very well balanced range of activities each day and the high quality care, support and guidance children receive, result in children with high levels of independence and self-esteem who thoroughly enjoy their learning. There are high expectations that children will

work and play harmoniously together and these result in excellent levels of cooperation. Their behaviour is outstanding and they are delighted when they receive awards for doing well. They have an excellent understanding of keeping safe due to the staff's careful explanations and support. For example, children thoroughly understand the importance of pedalling their bikes carefully around the track to ensure that they don't bump into other children. The school ensures that safeguarding requirements are in place. Children understand the importance of eating healthy foods and drinking regularly because staff emphasise this during snack time. Children are prepared extremely well for their future lives. They develop much higher levels of basic skills than expected for their age and understand the importance of sticking to the rules and considering the needs of others. The curriculum provides exciting and relevant opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is outstanding.

The indoor and outdoor curriculum is another key strength of the school. The Nursery is continually analysing this to fine-tune its effectiveness. The outdoor area has high quality permanent resources that create contrasting areas for children's learning. These structures have been very carefully designed to provide flexibility in their use. For example, the pirate ship is constructed in such a way that there are many different levels and steps that can be used in a variety of ways. Detailed planning ensures that the additional resources that staff provide each week offer children opportunities to learn across the full Nursery curriculum. Staff consider the needs of the boys very carefully in their planning and are very successful in capturing their imagination. For example, a tent frame had been provided after discussions about camping and the boys thoroughly enjoyed organising the resources under the brightly coloured awning. This consideration of boys' needs and interests results in them making excellent progress. This is not at the expense of the girls' needs, who make equally good progress.

The Nursery creates high quality partnerships with parents, outside specialists and the local community. The provision of a swimming or gymnastics session each week is very innovative and supports children's physical and personal development extremely effectively. Events such as the weekly assembly are truly celebratory and give children the chance to speak and perform to a large audience, which includes highly appreciative parents and carers. The provision of the breakfast and lunch clubs and the pre-school toddler club works extremely well. The agreement to have Reception children from the neighbouring primary school using the outdoor facilities during lunchtime works extremely well, particularly as many of the children came to the Nursery and know the routines. All of these strategies ensure that children make strong contributions to their community.

The governors have high levels of expertise. They monitor the Nursery's work very thoroughly both by analysing the data and information provided by the headteacher and by checking on the day-to-day work of the staff. Together with the senior staff they set challenging targets, ensure that resources are used efficiently and carry out detailed self-evaluation. This has ensured that the Nursery has sustained its outstanding provision since the previous inspection and has an excellent capacity for future improvement. It provides outstanding value for money.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

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

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

- Refine the balance of the daily key adult-led activity between indoor and outdoor settings.

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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	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	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**

12 May 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Oxclose Nursery School, Durham,

DL16 6RU

I think that you go to an excellent school.

Your headteacher and governors and teachers all work really hard together to keep making your school even better.

You have very exciting things to learn both indoors and outdoors. Your teachers are going to spend a little bit more time helping you learn outdoors.

Your assemblies and group time and snack time all help you to learn how to get on with each other.

You are very good at choosing what you want to learn, sharing with the other children and waiting for your turn.

By the time you leave the Nursery you have learnt much more than usual about all sorts of different things.

I hope that you really enjoy going to your next school and keep working really hard.

Yours sincerely

Maggi Shepherd

Lead inspector