

King's Lynn Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120766
Local Authority	NORFOLK LA
Inspection number	313733
Inspection dates	21–22 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Jackie Cousins

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	78
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Lindsay Campbell
Headteacher	Mrs Pauline Bradshaw
Date of previous school inspection	20 October 2003
School address	St James Park London Road King's Lynn Norfolk PE30 5PT
Telephone number	01553760221
Fax number	01553760221

Age group	3–5
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is an average sized nursery school. Most children are from White British backgrounds and a considerable number are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of children who find learning more difficult is broadly average. The level of knowledge with which many children start is below expectations for three year olds. A significant minority of children are in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of children who join or leave the school part way through the taught year is above that of most nursery schools. In 2005, the school gained the Norfolk Quality Assurance Award for the Foundation Stage and since then it has been reaccredited each year. Once a week, the school runs a toddler group for younger children and parents.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

King's Lynn Nursery is a good school. It has some outstanding features. The children get a super start to their education and they achieve effectively. Children of all abilities and backgrounds settle quickly into school life whenever they start at the nursery. This is because a very good partnership is in place between the staff and parents. One parent summed it up by saying, 'The staff at King's Lynn Nursery are fantastic and very friendly and welcoming.' All parents who responded to the questionnaire were really happy with the school and the progress their children are making. The school works thoughtfully to unite the community. For example, a toddler group assists younger children to learn to socialise effectively and parents to find out about ways to help their children and others. Parents expressed a wish to have more information about their child's progress. The inspector agreed with them that each term the school could share children's targets and their progress towards them more formally with parents. This will enable the school to give parents a clearer picture of their children's achievement.

The school's leadership places a very high emphasis on developing children's independence. As a result of the dedicated and good level of care, guidance and support from staff, children's personal development is outstanding. This is a terrific strength of the school. One parent remarked, 'I am confident that my child is safe and he loves going to nursery.' Children behave extremely well because staff guide them very conscientiously. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Children learn to reflect about their own strengths and develop their understanding very successfully of what they enjoy doing in school. They have really positive attitudes to their learning. Children adopt healthy lifestyles extremely effectively because the school encourages them to eat well and take regular exercise. Children handle equipment very safely and move about the school thoughtfully.

Children thoroughly enjoy the wide variety of interesting activities on offer in school. This is because of the effectively organised curriculum and rich environment which is created for them. Children have good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. Those from minority ethnic groups progress successfully in their school life. Teaching is good and so children make effective gains in their learning. The good use of practical activities ensures that children develop their basic skills well. Planning for reading and writing activities are not always sufficiently detailed and so occasionally objectives are rather broad. Assessment records evaluate children's skills well and so standards are in line with national expectations by the end of nursery.

Effective leadership and management mean the school has made good improvements since the last inspection. For example, children use information and communication technology (ICT) well and take pictures successfully on a digital camera. Leaders monitor standards satisfactorily but systems to track children's ongoing progress and standards are not fully developed. This means that the school does not have a detailed level of understanding of what proportion of children are working at above expected levels. The school is in a good position to continue improving in the future.

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

- Make sure that boys' and girls' progress and standards are tracked and monitored in more detail to enable the school clearly to record the proportion of children working at above expected levels of attainment.
- Develop the planning for learning activities in reading and writing to ensure that lesson objectives are specific and staff can easily evaluate children's successes.
- Make sure that children and parents know what targets children are working towards each term, especially in key areas of learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When children start at school, a significant proportion of them have levels of knowledge and understanding that are below expectations for three year olds. Children achieve well because teachers have high expectations of them. Children make good progress and this means that standards are in line with expectations by the end of the Nursery year. Boys and girls attain similar standards. More able children are extended effectively and they attain successfully. Those children who arrive part way through the taught year achieve well because the school supports them successfully. Children who are learning to speak English as an additional language establish their basic language skills well because staff use resources thoughtfully.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Relations between children and others are excellent because of the high quality care that staff take of them. Children's spiritual development is very strong because staff promote children's self-esteem extremely thoughtfully. The children show excellent levels of consideration for others. Their cultural awareness is well developed due to the planning of projects that enhance children's understanding of their own and others' cultures successfully. Children are prepared well for the next stage of education. Attendance is good and allows children to make good progress in their learning. The school is very effective in promoting children's awareness of safety, for example, by the use of community drama groups, who heighten children's awareness of hazards on the roads. Children are enthusiastic contributors in school and more widely, raising money for many charities. For example, children raised money to assist a school in Uganda to refurbish its buildings and equipment for learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good and assists children to progress well. Staff encourage children very successfully to be independent and think for themselves. Good teaching methods develop children's basic skills. For example, children learn to draw imaginatively because small wipeable boards are used effectively. Assessment activities are used well and especially to identify those children who are underachieving. The use of skilled teaching assistants and teachers with small groups mean children receive valuable extra attention. Time is used well and so children are encouraged to develop their skills in all areas of learning. Oral feedback from staff is positive and so children develop good attitudes to learning. Occasionally, planning for sessions sets learning objectives

which are rather too general. This means that staff and children can not easily evaluate their successes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum supports children's learning well. The provision for literacy and numeracy across the school is good. Projects link areas of learning successfully. Different groups of children are catered for well. The school is always looking for ways to improve and so further work is focusing on challenging gifted and talented children even more successfully. Children with additional needs are provided for effectively and so they achieve well. Children's individual education plans are used carefully. Everyday sessions are enhanced in many ways, including learning dances from other cultures, gardening and exciting cookery activities. Visitors to the school enrich children's development in many ways. ICT is used well to develop basic skills and enhance children's learning. Provision for children who arrive speaking little or no English is good and ICT is often used well to develop children's understanding of basic vocabulary.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All staff offer children a committed and really good level of welfare and care. This ensures that children develop into mature and very thoughtful young people. Children are encouraged successfully to lead healthy and safe lives. Health and safety issues in school are checked effectively and are fully in place. The school works carefully to safeguard children, and procedures meet requirements. Children's attendance is monitored suitably by the school. The children's individual attainment is assessed effectively. Academic guidance for children is sound. Specific targets for children are not always recorded clearly so that all staff are aware of the key areas which are to be developed, nor are these targets shared with parents. This prevents staff from reporting more fully on children's progress. Children have a good level of respect for different people's beliefs and their knowledge of our diverse society is good. This is because staff effectively develop their understanding of other cultures.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's leadership is impressive. Her leadership has given the school clear direction, which means it is improving all the time. The monitoring of the school's work at all levels is systematic and both strengths and areas for improvement are effectively identified. As a result, improvement planning is good. The school's leadership works thoughtfully to ensure that any barriers to learning are reduced and that children have equal opportunities to learning. Occasionally, leaders do not record information on the year groups' attainment rigorously. This means that leaders do not have a deep understanding of the progress and standards attained by boys or girls. Governors are well informed and closely involved with the school. Governors and staff contribute successfully to the school's evaluation of the education offered.

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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?	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 ¹ 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	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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	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

23 April 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of King's Lynn Nursery School, King's Lynn PE30 5PT

Thank you for helping me to find out about your school. I enjoyed watching you and talking to some of you. You are lucky to attend such a happy and friendly school. Good things about your school include:

- you make good progress in your work
- you really enjoy school
- you behave very well in sessions
- you can enjoy a wide range of activities
- your headteacher has really good ideas about ways to improve the school
- teaching is good and the staff work hard to make sessions interesting
- the staff and your parents work very well together to look after you.

I have asked your school to look at how they can make things even better. The most important things are:

- make sure that boys' and girls' progress and standards are watched in more detail
- ensure that learning activities for reading and writing are planned more carefully
- make sure that you and your parents know what targets you are working towards each term.

Keep enjoying all the things you are learning at King's Lynn Nursery School.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Cousins

Lead inspector