

# Gracelands Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103135
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	323765
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	55
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ameen Gulzar
<b>Headteacher</b>	Angela Mason
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 March 2006
<b>School address</b>	Grace Road Sparkbrook Birmingham B11 1ED
<b>Telephone number</b>	01217 723124
<b>Fax number</b>	01217 723124

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the Nursery and the following issues.

- Children's rates of achievement and the progress made by more-able children in acquiring basic skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT).
- The impact of the quality of provision, especially teaching and learning and the curriculum, on children's progress.
- The quality of leadership and management in securing children's good rates of progress and bringing about community cohesion.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations and interviews with the headteacher, senior teacher and Chair of the Governing Body.

## Description of the school

The percentage of children whose first language is not English is very high and around three quarters of them are at the early stages of speaking English. The number of children claiming free school meals is high. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average, and the range of their needs includes physical disability, autism and learning difficulties. Attainment on entry is well below the levels expected of children of this age.

The Nursery has a Sure Start centre on its premises which is not yet fully operational. As a result, the Nursery has set up a part-time Nursery class in the community room catering for 13 children. The Nursery facilities are used by other services to provide part-time crèche and play sessions during the day and school holidays. The Nursery has received many awards including the Healthy Schools Award and Basic Skills Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The Nursery provides a good quality of education for its children and prepares them well for the next stage in their learning. Children are confident, happy and well mannered. Their personal development and well-being are outstanding. This is because of the excellent pastoral care shown to them by all staff, the exceptionally good welfare provision, the good teaching and learning, and the very exciting activities.

The Nursery is regarded very highly by the local community because of the highly focused leadership and management of the headteacher who wants her staff, children and parents to 'reach for the stars'. This is demonstrated by children's outstanding outcomes in speaking and listening and in personal, social and emotional development. In these aspects the vast majority of children attain the levels expected for their age and their achievements are excellent. In nearly all other areas of learning children achieve well in relation to their prior attainment, although they attain levels that are below those expected for children of a similar age nationally. However, their achievements in writing are only satisfactory because too few opportunities are provided for more capable children to develop their early letter formation skills. This is because the teaching of phonics has only recently been introduced and has not been sufficiently modelled or monitored by the teacher with teaching and learning responsibility to ensure consistency of approach.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and their understanding of how children with English as an additional language learn is a particular strength. Outstanding relationships enable children to feel secure in their learning. Adults play with children and extend their vocabulary, for example by pretending to be ill in hospital and needing urgent medical attention. Teachers know their craft well but what prevents teaching from being outstanding is that not all staff are recording children's achievements with sufficient accuracy and observations of learning are not fully evaluated. As a result, the next steps of learning to be made are not always identified, and more capable children on occasions merely consolidate their skills and do not acquire enough new learning.

Parents are delighted with all that the Nursery offers. They are introduced to all necessary agencies with whom the Nursery has outstanding links. This has a positive effect on the children. Their welfare is promoted exceptionally well because of excellent links with other agencies that support children's well-being and safety. Children are exceptionally well looked after in a very safe, nurturing environment. Parenting classes, trips to the Lickey Hills and updates on learning opportunities offered to children all contribute to good community cohesion as parents learn more about one another's similarities and differences. Children's knowledge of healthy life choices and staying safe are outstanding as is their enjoyment of learning. Attendance has improved dramatically and is now outstanding. Children have outstanding attitudes and demonstrate exemplary behaviour and manners.

Learning opportunities offered are exemplary and this contributes to children's good rates of progress. Visiting artists and musicians, together with trips and visits, provide children with a very rich learning experience. Topics for example, about melting ice, a pirate's life on the sea, making marks in clay and the work of artists develop children's good knowledge of the world of work. They further develop children's understanding of people within their community and contribute to their exceptional enjoyment. Children are inquisitive as, for example, they use their good ICT skills to program their electronic mini-beasts to go up ramps. Staff use ICT well

to support all learning groups. Nevertheless, the use of outdoors as an extension of indoor learning is underdeveloped. Children do not have free access to the outdoors and this restricts their skills of independent choice. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good but, as yet, in spite of celebrating different festivals, there is not enough focus on developing children's global awareness.

Leadership and management of the Nursery are good. The headteacher has set up very secure systems of self-evaluation and knows her setting well. She leads the introduction of all aspects of improvement. Monitoring by other senior staff is not always as rigorous as it needs to be, an issue which has been identified in the school self-evaluation. Governance is satisfactory but rapidly improving under the recent appointment of a new Chair of governors. He is executing his duties well and leading the governing body into taking a more active role in school development and evaluation. The Nursery has good capacity to improve as demonstrated by year-on-year good achievement of all groups of children and significant improvement in attendance and in speaking and listening.

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

- Raise standards in writing of more-capable children by ensuring that they have more opportunities to practise their early writing skills.
- Develop the use of the outdoor area and ensure that children have free access to it.
- Develop the monitoring and evaluation role of senior leaders to ensure that all staff consistently record children's progress accurately and use this information to plan 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 is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do children in the EYFS 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/or disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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 effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?</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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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



**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Children

Inspection of Gracelands Nursery School, Birmingham, B11 1ED

Thank you for making us feel so welcome and for sharing your lovely work with us. You attend a good nursery with some fabulous things going on.

First of all, well done on your attendance. This is really superb, we are so pleased to see your parents bringing you to Nursery on time. Well done for behaving so very well and for staying so involved in your activities. You do a fabulous job washing cars! You make exceptional progress in your speaking and listening, and pick up classroom routines very quickly. Your teachers and your headteacher are good because they help you learn so many new things and it is lovely to see you enjoy reading so much. You are very kind and helpful to others and your manners are amazing. We hope that you continue being such good learners when you go to your next school because they help you to make such a difference to your community. The clay tiles you made of Jack and the Beanstalk are truly magnificent. You have outstanding learning opportunities and we are delighted that you look forward to the visits of musicians and artists which really improve your learning.

We have asked your teachers to make things even better for you by ensuring that:

- those of you who find learning easy have more opportunities to practise your letters
- you play more in the outdoor area and carry on with learning from indoors
- your senior teachers become more involved in helping staff chart your progress and use this information to plan your next steps of learning.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley Lead inspector