

# The Lawns Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109758
<b>Local Authority</b>	Windsor and Maidenhead
<b>Inspection number</b>	325021
<b>Inspection date</b>	1 April 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Charalambos Loizou

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)	121
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Paula Shepherd
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sian Thomas
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 May 2006
<b>School address</b>	Imperial Road Windsor SL4 3RU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01753 865 351
<b>Fax number</b>	01753 865 351

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and the following areas:

- the consistency of the teaching and the demands that it places on the children
- the quality of assessment and its impact on teachers' planning and meeting the needs of all children
- the extent to which leaders and governors are sustaining improvements to the school and maintaining high standards of care and education.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, children's work, the analysis of teachers' assessments and records of children's progress and performance, as well as parents' responses to questionnaires and discussions with the children, staff and a governor. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

The Lawns is a large Nursery school and Children's Centre that admits three- to five-year-olds who attend part-time or full-time. Children join the school at different times during the year. There is significant turnover as families move into and out of the area, and because some children leave to join other primary schools in the year in which they will turn five. The school added a Children's Centre last year, which provides opportunities for the staff to work with parents and carers in the community, as well as school-based workshops and support for children and their families. There is also pre-nursery provision on the school site for children from two to five years of age, although this is managed by a private provider and was not part of this inspection.

Although the majority of children are of White British heritage, there is significant ethnic diversity represented among the rest. The proportion of children in the early stages of learning English is much lower than in most schools. A small proportion of children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The main areas of need are in speech and language. The school achieved the national Healthy School Award and was accredited Eco-Schools status in recognition of its commitment to the sustainable use of energy and the environment.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

The overwhelming majority of parents are right when they state that this is an outstanding school. The children and their families benefit enormously from the high standard of care and education provided. Highly effective leadership and excellent teaching enable the children to achieve extremely well and reach high standards for their age. Many parents paid tribute to the efforts and commitment of the staff and governors. Most responded to the inspection questionnaire with comments such as, 'The support and help shown by the school has been fantastic', and, 'All the staff are wonderful with the children'. The inspection judgements agree entirely with parents' views, one summing up the sentiments of nearly all parents perfectly: 'The Lawns is a fantastic choice and a great start to school life.'

The children make excellent progress. By the time they leave, standards in all areas of learning are well above those expected of four and five-year-olds. Excellent attendance rates reflect how well children enjoy school. Consistently effective teaching and support ensure that the children thrive on all that is offered in a highly inclusive and supportive environment. Children often share ideas with others and work cooperatively, and the staff skilfully plan a productive balance of activities that are led by adults and those that the children choose for themselves. 'I'm working hard - look at this', says one child when choosing to plant flowers with others, and another explained to an inspector, 'We plant trees too, you know, lots of them - it's like a jungle!' Children with speech and language delay receive highly effective support and make rapid progress, developing their communication skills. In addition, children who are learning English as an additional language are encouraged to express their views and work with other children, helping them to gain confidence and fluency when speaking to others. The highly qualified and talented staff team ensures that all children work and play in clean, safe and stimulating indoor and outdoor areas. There are advanced plans in place to extend the range of outdoor creative activities, adding much to what is already excellent provision, and reflecting the high expectations and innovative ambitions of the headteacher, staff and governors. All welfare and safeguarding requirements are met, and the staff are vigilant and effective in ensuring that the children are safe and secure in all areas.

The children are active and independent. Tidy-up time and clearing away successfully develop their sense of responsibility so that they make a positive contribution to the school. The staff make excellent use of pictorial cue cards to sequence the list of jobs and activities that the children will undertake each day. Children of all backgrounds and abilities feel special because their efforts are valued, which is reflected in the beautiful displays of their work that include exciting dinosaur sculptures, paintings and storybooks that they have made for themselves. Children wait their turn, share resources and cooperate, showing maturity well beyond their years. They model the behaviour of others through an excellent range of role-play in different indoor and outdoor settings. These include the 'cabin school' where the children organise themselves into teachers and pupils, and start the day by filling in the weather chart. One child invited an inspector into the 'school' and explained, 'There are five bears in our story because you can make up your own stories here, you know', reflecting the excellent way in which the staff encourage the children to extend their learning by encouraging them to adapt their own versions of traditional stories.

The staff keep excellent records, samples of children's work, and photographs of children's progress in all areas of learning called 'learning journeys', and these are shared with the children and their families. The leadership team and governors have a well-established and highly

effective information management system that records data about the children's progress and performance. This enables the staff to have easy access to information about the children's learning and development, and to set challenging targets that maximise their progress and performance. Teachers' planning is a model of excellent practice. It incorporates records of the progress that children are making and is skilfully adapted to meet their welfare and learning needs.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children is outstanding. They learn about the wider world through a wealth of practical experiences such as the recent Eco project, when children simulated the creation of conditions on the South Pole, or when sculpting and painting leaves for the school's 'seasonal tree'. Inclusion, racial harmony and relationships are excellent, reflecting the extensive range of work and celebration of different customs, cultures and festivals. Healthy snack times and lunch club, as well as physically challenging climbing activities, help the children to learn about healthy and active living. Recycling projects and fund-raising events - as well as special topics about, for example, their journey to school or the sustainable use of materials - reflect how well the children are learning about the natural world around them and its limited resources. The children enjoy contributing to the school and wider community. For example, they make cakes for elderly members of the community, raise funds for a local hospice, and work with a visiting artist to design and maintain the sensory garden. The Children's Centre is an excellent resource, and the staff effectively work with and help new arrivals and families to settle in through regular workshops, cake and coffee mornings, and information sessions. Home visits and special events organised by the school, such as the current 'Easter Festival', bring the community together and enable the children to share and celebrate their work achievements with their families.

The headteacher is a highly skilled practitioner whose enthusiasm exudes confidence in everyone associated with the school and its community. Outstanding leadership and management ensure that the school knows its strengths and what needs to be improved. The school's strong commitment to the sustainable use of resources and the environment, as well as its stimulating curriculum and imaginative use of information and communication technology, demonstrate that staff and governors are enterprising, innovative and forward-thinking in seeking to grow and develop. Outstanding improvements since the last inspection show that the school has excellent capacity to keep on developing. The school's accurate evaluations of its effectiveness, and its ambitious plans for the future use of outdoor areas, reflect the very high expectations that the headteacher and governors set themselves. They work in excellent partnership with parents, schools and other organisations, and are a real asset to their community.

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

- There are no significant areas for improvement. However, the inspectors agree with the school's current priorities to extend the range of activities that promote children's creative development in outdoor areas.

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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

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do children in the EYFS achieve?</b>	1
The standards[1] 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/or disabilities make progress	1

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children?</b>	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
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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?</b>	1
<b>How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?</b>	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?</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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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



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

28 April 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of The Lawns Nursery School, Windsor, SL4 3RU

You were all so nice to the inspectors, and we really enjoyed seeing you working hard and having fun. You go to a fantastic school and we can see why you love school so much. Well done to you and all the staff and governors. We were very pleased with your excellent behaviour and the way you all try hard. I really enjoyed seeing how clever you were when growing plants, writing stories and drawing lots of lovely pictures. You are also very good at using computers and making those fantastic dinosaurs - they are brilliant, well done!

Your headteacher, staff and governors are doing a great job, especially in working with your parents to help you to grow and learn together. I really like the way you save waste paper and recycle things, and you are really clever when it comes to helping with new ideas, like the lovely garden you designed at the front of the school.

I have asked your teachers to carry on making the outdoor areas exciting places for you to learn and play in. Your teachers and carers have some great ideas for making even better use of these areas, and I bet you cannot wait to see what these are. I am excited too, and your parents agree that your school and its Children's Centre do a lot for you and your families.

You can all help too, by carrying on trying hard and supporting your teachers and parents, especially when they come to visit and help in school. The inspectors thought that you were all fantastic, and I will always remember my short stay at your excellent school. I wish you, your parents, the staff and governors the very best, and I am so pleased to have met you all.

Yours faithfully

Charalambos Loizou

Lead Inspector