

Westfield Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109422
Local Authority	Bedfordshire
Inspection number	337284
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Nina Bee

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Thorne
Headteacher	Ann Simpkins
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2008
School address	Westfield Road Dunstable Bedfordshire
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Age group	3–5
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2009
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Registered childcare provision	Westfield
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	70
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	Not previously inspected

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors made six visits to the nursery and held meetings with staff, parents and a governor. They talked to children, observed the school's work and looked at policies, internal and external monitoring evidence, information concerning children's progress, teachers' planning and safeguarding documentation. Fifty-six parental questionnaires were analysed along with 12 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- if all groups of children make outstanding progress
- whether outstanding judgements for provision and leadership and management can be substantiated
- how well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate teaching and the curriculum.

Information about the school

This 156-place nursery currently offers children part-time education. Almost all children come from White British backgrounds. Children usually stay for three to four terms. The proportion of children identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. A few children use English as an additional language and are at an early stage in learning the language. The school has recently received the International Schools Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

The nursery provides a good quality of education for the children. It cares for them exceptionally well. Children's needs are extremely well catered for and parents particularly value the personal attention that every child receives. After focusing on engaging more successfully with parents, this aspect of the work of the nursery is now outstanding. Home visits before children enter nursery are greatly appreciated by parents. In addition, leaders and managers ensure that children are familiar with the adults who will be teaching and looking after them. An excellent feature of the nursery is the way parents are welcomed at the start of each session to help settle their children into their new routines, for example, to self-register by identifying their names. As a result, children are very well prepared for entry into nursery and settle in quickly and easily. Smiling faces as they enter each day show that they cannot wait to get started. Careful planning and excellent knowledge of each child make sure that the needs of everyone are met. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well and in line with their classmates because they are sensitively supported by the adults who work with them. When children start nursery with limited English, because they speak a different language at home, they generally achieve well as adults support them effectively as they move from activity to activity. However, on entry to nursery there is no formal assessment to indicate how well they are progressing in the development of basic English skills or of monitoring this process. The way all children's progress is tracked through each area of learning is effective and clearly shows the good and often outstanding progress that they make. At present, the information that is collected on children does not fully reflect the new guidance. By the time children leave, most reach the levels expected of them.

From thorough monitoring and accurate self-evaluation, the leaders and managers have a good understanding of the nursery's strengths and areas for development. Partnerships with others are excellent, and have been developed well, particularly as staff have successfully gained an International Schools Award. Children have excellent opportunities to develop their cultural awareness when they link with others from schools in Europe and America and learn about different celebrations and festivals in the world.

The nursery has outstanding capacity to sustain further improvement as seen in the way it has successfully tackled the weakness identified at the last inspection, by, for example, introducing good opportunities for children to begin to plan and review their activities to enable them to become aware of what they have learned. The need to eat healthily, look after their teeth and take regular exercise is promoted very effectively in the well-planned curriculum. Consequently, children develop an outstanding awareness

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of this important part of their lives. The governing body has improved its practice since the last inspection. It is now well informed and so is able to support and challenge the nursery well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the assessment procedures for children who use English as an additional language and are at an early stage in learning the language by:
 - ensuring that their levels are identified on entry to the nursery
 - checking that progress, as they acquire new skills, is monitored carefully.
- Sharpen staff skills in collating and monitoring information on children's progress in order to reflect the new guidance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children**2**

Excellent relationships develop between staff and children, who move between a good range of adult-focused activities and those which they choose themselves. Children's enjoyment of learning is seen in their confidence to try new experiences. As they explored the properties of ice, they worked very effectively together and learnt well. They shared resources, such as hammers, well as they used them to try to break the ice. Language was developed successfully by the adults who used words such as 'icy', 'cold' and 'melting'. As a result, children could say that the ice was not hot and that it was making their hands very cold. Learning is good and at times outstanding. Adults usually expect children to listen very carefully, consistently check that the children understand what they are doing and give many opportunities for them to articulate their thinking. Learning occasionally slows when staff do not make it clear that listening to adults and other children is very important. All children have many opportunities to make marks on paper and learn to write their names. At times, higher-attaining children do not get enough guidance to develop the correct way to write the letters in their name. By the time children leave, most reach the levels expected for their ages. Given that starting points are below those usually expected, this represents good achievement. Children have good opportunities to develop physically outside as they climb on the apparatus and ride bikes. They develop their knowledge and understanding of how things grow when they plant and harvest fruits and vegetables in their garden. Children show a good awareness of safety as they do activities outside, and when they use scissors, playdoh and other equipment. Behaviour is generally good, and at times outstanding. One or two children occasionally forget what they have been told and run about inside without thinking what they are doing. Children's contribution to the community is good. They take responsibility very seriously. For example, they take the register to the office, and enthusiastically fill shoe boxes for children who are not as fortunate as they are at Christmas. The nursery caters well for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment ¹	3
The quality of children's learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
Children's behaviour	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Children's attendance ¹	2
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Successfully planned activities meet the needs of the children well because all adults work very effectively as a team and have a good understanding of how these young children learn. Staff all contribute well to the good and at times outstanding learning that takes place. Assessment is thorough. It gives a good understanding of how well children are doing and is used effectively to adapt activities to meet children's needs in planning future activities. Current requirements are well met for providing activities that build on children's interests and promote independence. As a result, children are very interested in all that is on offer and develop very positive attitudes to learning. Adults skilfully interact with children to move learning onto the next step. For example, when an adult saw a child using a computer expertly to move from one object to another, she sensitively interacted with the child to make sure that he could name all the objects he was looking at. Information and communication technology is used well especially to reinforce and develop basic communication, literacy and numeracy skills. Areas where children can use their imagination and play are exciting and well resourced.

Children are looked after and cared for in an exemplary way. They get on very well with each other and the adults who help them because there is a strong focus on developing personal and social skills. A special feature of this nursery is that children's allocated time is flexible. As they get older, they stay for longer on one day each week and enjoy

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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lunchtime together. This sociable occasion focuses well on eating a healthy packed lunch. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well catered for because of the excellent links with external agencies which provide advice and support. Childcare provision, before, after and during the working day is of a good quality. Adults develop very good relationships with the children. Activities are well resourced and children enjoy themselves as they learn and play in a safe and caring environment.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is properly ambitious and has a high commitment in making sure that all children achieve their very best in all they do. She ensures that equality is well promoted and children have access to at least good and, at times, outstanding teaching. Her vision has been effectively shared among all who work in the nursery. Team spirit is excellent and staff morale is high because everyone's work is valued and appreciated. Parents are particularly supportive of all that is done for their children. The curriculum makes a good contribution to promoting community cohesion and a suitable plan of action has recently been developed. This has not been in place long enough for leaders and managers to evaluate the considerable work already being done. At the time of the inspection, health and safety arrangements fulfilled all safeguarding requirements. The staff and governors work effectively together to ensure that children learn as they play in a safe and secure environment.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

The parents who spoke to the inspectors and those who returned questionnaires are extremely happy with the work of the nursery. Over a quarter of parents took the trouble to write very positive comments on the questionnaires. Parents' comments focused on how much their children gain socially, emotionally and academically, how staff are always available to support them if they have a problem, and how much their children enjoy their time in the nursery. All returns confirmed that children are safe and secure in school and that parents are well informed about the progress their children make. They say that teaching is good and that the school helps their children adopt a healthy lifestyle. Parents think that unacceptable behaviour is effectively dealt with, and that their suggestions and concerns are listened to. All parents feel that the school is well led and managed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Westfield Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspectors received 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 92 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	89	6	11	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	48	86	8	14	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	41	73	15	27	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	68	18	32	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	42	75	13	23	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	68	17	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	59	22	39	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	30	54	21	38	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	68	18	32	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	63	18	32	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	66	17	30	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	40	71	15	27	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	84	9	16	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its children. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well children acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



2 December 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Westfield Nursery, Dunstable, LU6 1DL

We so much enjoyed visiting your nursery. We liked talking to you and watching you play and learn. From your smiling faces we could see that you all enjoy the activities you do. You have lots of room inside and a lovely area to climb and ride your bikes outside, as well as doing many other exciting things - like growing vegetables and fruits in the garden area. Your mums and dads think you go to a good nursery and they are right.

These are the things we found out about your nursery.

You all get off to a good start.

The way you are cared for and looked after is excellent.

Teaching in the nursery is good and sometimes outstanding.

You learn lots about the importance of eating healthy foods and taking regular exercise.

The staff are really good at linking with other people here and in different countries to make learning even more interesting and such a lot of fun.

You have the opportunity to learn about different countries. I guess you thought your snow was deep until you saw those photographs from America.

Your nursery is well led and managed.

By the time you leave you reach levels that are similar to those expected for your ages.

We have asked the staff to do two things to improve the education you receive.

Make sure that when children who speak English as an additional language start Nursery, they are assessed on the English skills they have already learnt. Then, check on their progress regularly.

Adults are good at checking how well you are doing and are moving to a new system for doing this. We have asked them to get used to it and to make sure everyone understands how it works.

Keep smiling and trying hard as you work and play

Yours sincerely

Nina Bee

Lead inspector

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