

# Oakengates Nursery School and Children's Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123348
<b>Local Authority</b>	Telford and Wrekin
<b>Inspection number</b>	340321
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 June 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Best

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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	68
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Amanda Seys
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kay Darlington
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	The Place Limes Walk Oakengates
<b>Telephone number</b>	01952 387910
<b>Fax number</b>	01952 387919
<b>Email address</b>	Sam.chamberlain@taw.org.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 11 sessions and 14 members of staff, and met with representatives of the governing body, members of the senior management team, parents and children. They observed the school's work, and looked at policies, planning, assessment records and analysis of children's progress, and the school's safeguarding documentation. During the inspection, 21 parental questionnaires were returned and these were analysed by the inspection team.

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

- how well different groups of children progress and whether this is consistent across all the areas of learning
- how well staff use assessment information to plan children's next steps in learning
- how effectively priorities for development are being implemented, monitored and evaluated.

## Information about the school

The Nursery, known by staff, parents and children as the pre-school, is part of a Children's Centre that provides day care for children between the ages of 0 and 8 years. Most children are White British and a few children from minority ethnic groups speak English as an additional language. Children start in the pre-school in the term following their third birthday. Most attend on a part-time basis but there is a high degree of flexibility and a minority of children attend full-time on a regular basis.

The baby and toddler provision, previously run in partnership with a private company, was combined with the pre-school in April 2009. The before- and after-school care is run by the governing body and was included in this inspection.

The provision was inspected by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 in February 2010.

**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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

### Main findings

Oakengates Nursery School and Children's Centre gives children an outstanding start to their education. The school has made significant progress since the last inspection. The merger of the provision for babies and toddlers with the pre-school has been highly successful. Standards and provision have risen and the impact of these improvements highlights the school's outstanding capacity for further development.

The school's emphasis on nurturing children's personal, social and emotional development lies at the heart of children's outstanding achievement. Children are exceedingly happy, secure and safe. They are very content and at ease with the well-established daily routines. One parent spoke for many others in saying, 'Oakengates Centre is where your child will get the best start in life.'

Children's skills and experiences when they start in the pre-school provision are broadly similar to those expected for their age, although there is a wide range within each area of learning and fewer children than expected are above these expectations. By the time they move onto Reception classes, most children are attaining standards that are at, or above, age related expectations. The staff have rightly identified that many children arrive with a limited vocabulary and have put in place adult-led story reading and writing sessions to help address this. All children make exceptionally good progress due to a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities that are well matched to their individual needs.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their behaviour is excellent, and children thrive in a calm and supportive learning environment. They know where they stand and respond very well to adults' positive reinforcement of high expectations. Attendance is good, with most absences due to illness. One parent commented that his son, 'Likes a bit of lie-in but is out of bed like a shot on the mornings he attends the Oakengates Nursery.'

The quality of provision is outstanding. In all the observations during the inspection, teaching was never less than good and frequently outstanding. Sessions are conducted at a brisk pace and children pay close attention to instructions. Assessment information is used very well to support and challenge children's next steps in learning. A strength is the way in which children are starting to independently check on how well they and others are getting on, and make decisions for themselves as to what they need to do next to improve. The school provides children with a rich and memorable range of learning experiences. High-quality planning draws on skills across the areas of learning to provide broad and balanced range of experiences to support children's learning. Visits and visitors help to broaden children's experiences and understanding and make a

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significant contribution to the school's first-class work in promoting community cohesion. The quality of care, support and guidance that children and their families receive is outstanding. Staff work closely with parents and carers, healthcare and other professionals and other outside agencies to support children's learning, well-being and development. The before- and after-school provision for children attending local primary schools is very well managed and popular with its regular clients, many of whom previously attended the pre-school.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher's exceptionally strong drive and ambition is extremely well supported by the highly committed and hardworking staff team. The establishment of a senior management team when the provisions were combined has been highly successful and has proved its worth by managing the period of change outstandingly well. The school's self-evaluation report rigorously identifies strengths and areas for development, and accurately informs the school development plan. This clearly outlines the way forward, with robust success criteria and achievable timescales.

The governing body plays an active part in the work of the school. Its members bring to their roles a wide range of skills and experiences and, collectively, they exercise their responsibilities diligently. Links with parents, carers and other partners are excellent. The school works very well with its partners in the local authority and health authority, and actively promotes its provision in the locality. The value for money given is excellent.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Continue to increase the depth and breadth of children's vocabulary through regular opportunities for discussions, early reading and early writing experiences.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of children****1**

Children listen carefully to adults and each other, follow instructions promptly and speak clearly and confidently. The emphasis this year on systematically developing letters and sounds has paid dividends, with children enthusiastically participating and learning well in these short but focussed sessions. Children's wide experiences in using mark makers is successfully underpinning the development of their early handwriting skills and many demonstrate good levels of skill in tracing, copying and independently forming letters and words. However, many have a restricted vocabulary and are benefiting from opportunities for story reading and writing to expand their knowledge and understanding of different words.

Children's mathematical development is very well promoted through problem-solving, reasoning and number work. More able children accurately recognise and name a range of three-dimensional shapes and point out the differences between them. In their creative development, children develop a wide range of skills in applying paint and acquire good knowledge of joining skills in assembling a carrier bag.

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Groupings are flexible and this enables staff to plan and meet children's varying needs exceptionally well. More able children are challenged and are being propelled forward by what they do. Children with additional learning needs, such as those with delayed social development, are well supported in making the best possible progress. Those with special educational needs benefit from planned programmes that draw upon expert advice and ensure that each small step in learning is successfully established before moving on to the next. Children for whom English is an additional language make rapid progress and take a full and active part in all activities.

Children get on very well with each other, play together and share equipment. They take on responsibility well by, for example, tidying up at the end of each session. Staff regularly consult children and they, in turn, are very confident in sharing their thoughts and ideas about a wide range of subjects, such as how the sand pit could be improved. Children have an excellent understanding of keeping healthy. Lunchtimes are extremely well managed and children thoroughly enjoy the high quality meals prepared and cooked on the premises. Nearly all children are fully independent in visiting the toilet and washing their hands. Staff very successfully promote children's social skills during this time, helping them to develop a strong sense of being part of a community. Children are highly active throughout each session, making excellent use of a wide range of equipment to promote their physical development.

*These are the grades for children's outcomes*

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of children's learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which children feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Children's behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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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<b>The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: Children's attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The indoor and outdoor areas are used extremely well and the movement of children between these is expertly managed. Children thoroughly enjoy planning what they are to do in each session. Their active participation in this, and in reviewing what they have achieved at the end of each session, accelerates their development and helps to establish good working habits that will sustain their learning in the future.

The strength of the curriculum is the way in which staff adapt learning to children's individual needs. This was particularly well demonstrated during an outside session where the teacher's expectations of children 'training' at taking goal shots for the World Cup later that day were adjusted to give individuals different challenges suited to their capabilities. As a result, all made rapid progress and their enjoyment was strengthened by having individually improved their game from different starting points.

The very positive responses by parents and carers to the inspection questionnaire, together with their comments made in conversation with inspectors, highlight the strong bond of trust with the staff. This, in turn, is reflected in the confidence children have in those that care for them. The provision for the babies and toddlers has been very well integrated with that for pre-school children and very effective steps have been taken to further improve the children's transition from one stage to the next. This has been particularly the case in respect of assessment information, with a greater degree of accuracy now evident.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The systems in place for monitoring the impact of the provision on children's learning are highly effective. Regular, focussed discussions take place concerning the assessments staff make about children's progress and skill development. Children's

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achievement and progress are carefully tracked and analysed. The school's emphasis on learning focuses on children's outcomes and this information is extremely well used by staff to plan the next steps in children's learning. As a result of the rigorous way in which the school uses information about what children know and can do to challenge and stretch them, its promotion of equal opportunities is outstanding.

The governing body has worked very well with the headteacher to secure the school's future, demonstrating an innovative approach and adapting quickly to rapidly changing circumstances. The management team and governing body have worked very successfully with the local authority to address the issues arising from this with imagination and a strong understanding of young children's development. The refurbishment work currently underway is an inspired solution, given the complex structure of the building, firmly focussed on the best ways of promoting children's learning. In holding the school to account, the governing body demonstrates a strong understanding of the impact the provision has on children's development and progress. Safeguarding arrangements are stringent and the school is rigorous in implementing its arrangements for the safety the children in its care.

The school is a highly cohesive community. Leaders have carefully analysed the context and evaluated the provision they make for promoting community cohesion within the locality and ensure that children have plenty of opportunities to develop their understanding beyond this. As a result of visits and follow-up activities, children have an excellent understanding of the customs, culture and daily life of a community in India.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	1
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	1
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	1



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## **Views of parents and carers**

Parents and carers expressed their overwhelming support for the school both in the questionnaires they returned and in the conversations they had with inspectors. The inspection team endorses their positive views about the provision made for their children.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Oakengates Childrens Centre 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 inspection team received 21 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 68 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	90	2	10	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	95	1	5	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	19	90	2	10	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	86	3	14	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	81	4	19	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	76	5	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	86	3	14	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)	15	71	4	19	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	86	3	14	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	67	7	33	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	76	4	19	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	86	3	14	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	100	0	0	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



25 June 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Oakengates Nursery School and Children's Centre, Oakengates, Telford, TF2 6EP

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited you last week. We very much enjoyed hearing what you had to say and seeing all the wonderful things you do. We particularly liked how well you planned all the activities you wanted to do in both the inside and the outside areas. We were really impressed by how well you remembered all the things you had done when you got back together to review the session, and that you are starting to check on how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve.

We think your school is outstanding. That means it is giving you a really good start. Your behaviour is excellent and you do well because you work hard. Everyone looks after you exceptionally well. They make sure that all the things you have to do are really interesting and will help you get on. We very much enjoyed the stories you have helped to write, especially the one about the cat with three legs. We think it is very important that you do much more of this because it is helping you to learn and understand many more words.

There are lots of exciting changes being made both inside and outside in the next few weeks. Soon, some of you will be starting at your new schools: we wish you well for the future. Keep working hard and enjoying yourselves.

Yours sincerely

Mike Best

Lead inspector

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