

# The Wharf Nursery School and Children Centre

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124913
<b>Local Authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	340682
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 June 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Vale

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	67
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Keith Syson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mandy Heslop
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	The Eashing Building Godalming GU7 2LF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01483 415220
<b>Fax number</b>	01483 861 985
<b>Email address</b>	office@wharf.surrey.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–4
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 June 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	340682

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

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

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors spent most of the time looking at learning. They visited nine lessons, and saw all staff in the Nursery School teach. They held meetings with the vice chair of governors, staff, the special educational needs co-ordinator, and talked to children. They observed the Nursery's work, and looked at assessments of the progress of individuals and different groups of children, and records of its own observations of lessons. They examined in closer detail documents and information related to observations and assessment, planning, provision for special educational needs, the school development plan, and other documentation, along with 36 questionnaires from parents and carers of pupils aged 3-4.

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

- how effectively children's progress and development is assessed and used to help move them on to the next steps in their learning, particularly for vulnerable children
- how well the outdoor accommodation is used to promote children's' learning
- the provision for children identified with special educational needs and learning difficulties and the impact of this provision on their progress.

## Information about the school

The Wharf Nursery School and Children's Centre is currently situated in temporary accommodation on the outskirts of Godalming while their Nursery School is being re-built. The majority of children are from a White British background, although there are a very small number of children from Asia and Latin America who are new to learning English. Increasing numbers of children are identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the main needs identified are communication and language difficulties or delay, and autism. There are five children with statements of educational need. The Wharf offers a range of services to parents and carers, and the wider community in partnership with other agencies. This includes before-school care for children although at the time of the inspection, while four children are registered only one child was attending the Breakfast Club.

**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**

**2**

### Main findings

Parents are overwhelmingly in agreement that the care, guidance and support their children receive at the Wharf are outstanding. The inspection findings support this view. As a result, children feel safe, make good progress in their learning, are very happy and thoroughly enjoy being at the Nursery School. This positive view is reflected in the comments written by one parent or carer to the inspectors, 'My son cannot wait to get to Nursery School each day, he loves his teachers and friends at The Wharf, he is able to spend time doing the activities he loves and is encouraged to try those he may not be so confident with.'

The Nursery School's own assessments, supported by the evidence seen during the inspection, show that the children start with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy, and for some in personal, social and emotional development. Good teaching, and an in-depth knowledge of individual children's interests and abilities, enables the children to gain rapidly in confidence and try out new things. This helps them to make good progress, so that they leave Nursery School with attainment as expected for their age.

Outstanding equality of opportunities and integration ensures that there is excellent provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for the small number who are new to learning English. There is very good support for families, parents and carers and excellent links with a range of outside agencies. Early intervention, and positive action by the Nursery School, also enhances children's progress.

The curriculum offers a variety of activities and the Nursery School is taking full advantage of its temporary 'greener' setting, watching ducklings hatch and piglets grow! Children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves; however at the same time, if they are not ready to do this they are supported well by the adults until they have developed confidence in their own abilities. This encourages them to become independent learners. It also provides them with a strong foundation for the next stage of their education as children progress well towards the goals expected of them in both their academic and personal development.

Parents, carers and their families are actively encouraged to be part of the learning process. For those without transport, the mini bus is a necessary link to the temporary site of the Nursery School to enable their children to continue attending. This shows how caring and supportive the Nursery School is of families and their children. There are particularly good links with external agencies enhancing the excellent support available for those children who have greater learning needs, and is a major reason why these

**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

children make such strong progress in their learning.

Observations and assessments are undertaken by the majority of staff, and used to inform planning; however this is inconsistent. Some staff do not undertake or record these regularly enough and there are some considerable gaps in some children's information. Children's individual portfolios show the variety of activities which they do and the good progress they make. As yet, the next steps to support children and to move them on in their learning are not identified in these portfolios.

Both the good leadership and governance have a clear vision for the development of the Nursery School and the children's centre and a considerable amount of time and energy has been spent in preparing for the move to the temporary site and in planning the new build. Parents have been very positive in their views that this has been handled well with minimum disruption to the children's learning and welfare. Self-evaluation is accurate and the school development plan clearly identifies areas for future development. This along with the good progress made since the previous inspection, good teaching and the good progress which children make in their learning, shows that there is good capacity for continuous improvement.

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

- Ensure that there is a consistency of approach to the recording of children's formative assessments through more frequent recording and regular monitoring.
- Ensure that the next steps for children's learning are clearly identified and recorded, and used to support planning, in order to support and challenge children and move them on in their learning, and that these are regularly shared with all parents.

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

**2**

Children achieve well, from starting points which are below those expected for their age. Many children only attend the Nursery School for three terms, and yet in this short amount of time they make rapid progress in their learning. By the time they leave, the attainment of the majority of children is in line with what is expected for their age. The high percentage of those identified with specific learning difficulties and disabilities make exceptional progress from their starting points. Children lacking in confidence when they first arrive, are encouraged and supported by staff to become self-assured, happy learners. Parents are particularly positive about the outcomes their children achieve; 'My son has significant learning difficulties. Staff at The Wharf have bent over backwards to meet his particular needs. He is always treated as an individual and has made excellent progress.'

Staff always take note of individual children's particular interests. For example this was seen when, despite a wonderful array of interesting and stimulating activities on offer, one child really wanted to continue the game he had been playing from the previous day with the train set. Staff listened, and together they were able to get out the train set so that he was able to continue. This not only supported his specific emotional and language developmental needs but was a positive re-enforcement of what he had learnt

**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

before.

Healthy life styles are encouraged, children plant and grow their own fruit and vegetables and cook with them when they are ready. They spend the majority of their time outdoors, running, jumping, riding, and generally moving about at full whack! Dancing sessions also enhance the good physical development of children. Children are well behaved and there is a harmonious atmosphere amongst them all. On the odd occasion where there is some conflict, staff deal with the situation well and moral understanding of right and wrong is high. Despite the Nursery School having robust systems and encouraging good attendance there are still some families whose children do not attend regularly.

The good integration of all children, excellent equality of opportunity and the free flow of movement between all areas enable the children to make rapid progress in their personal social and emotional development. They are very keen to learn, and try out new experiences. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children is good. Children are interested in the world around them and are fortunate in their new setting to have access to a field, pigs and ducklings. Many are eager to try out new experiences which broaden their knowledge and understanding. One parent admirably summed it up, 'The environment is good, secure and enriched. Our daughter positively looks forward to attending.'

*These are the grades for children's outcomes*

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Children's attainment <sup>1</sup>	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	1
<b>The extent to which children feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Children's behaviour</b>	<b>2</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>2</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.

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> Taking into account: Children's attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>2</b>  <b>3</b>
<b>The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good and is exceptionally caring. Despite being new to the temporary setting there are already well established routines which have helped children to settle in very quickly. Children's own interests and needs are clearly taken into account when planning an interesting and creative curriculum. Great enjoyment was had by a number of children outdoors with: watering the strawberries (and each other); making number plates for the bikes and then taking them to be repaired in the garage; watching snails move and playing with the musical instruments and the windmills. Equally effective is the indoor learning environment where information and communication technology (ICT) is independently accessed by the children and they play with dinosaurs, trains and creative arts. All activities are well thought out and clearly support the good progress which children make. Staff are very good at talking with and listening to the children; this is very effective in helping the children who are new to learning English, and others, make rapid progress in their spoken English. Teachers are effective in ensuring that the children are motivated and engaged in their learning. However assessment and its use is a more varied picture. Whilst there are good assessment procedures in place, these are not consistently followed by all staff. In some instances the inspection team found that there were large gaps in the gathering and recording of information about individual children and their abilities. Whilst the move may have hindered the gathering of some information, this lack of recording information means that children and their parents are not always clear about the next steps needed to help children to move on in their learning. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The setting is very inclusive and opportunities are open to all children regardless of their specific needs or abilities.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>2</b>  <b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

**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 Nursery School and Children's Centre is well led and managed. Staff make an effective team who work together well, making sure that improvements are driven forward rapidly. The setting places the promotion of equality of opportunity and the full integration of all children at the centre of its work which results in the children making good progress in their learning. Very good links with external agencies support the school's commitment to an 'holistic' approach to developing all aspects of children's learning and personal development, and support for families. Community cohesion is good and identifies the well established links to the wider community and especially those within the local area. Numerous external agencies work with and alongside the nursery to support children effectively.

The governors are fully supportive and aware of the Nursery School's strengths and areas for development. Good safeguarding procedures set right tone for the safety of the children ensuring that risk assessments, both on site and when they go out on visits and trips, are regularly and efficiently carried out. Staff visit children's homes before they start to attend and this first hand knowledge is used well to engage children in learning from the outset. There are very positive links with parents and carers and the children's centre offers many opportunities for families to come together.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</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>2</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>	2
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	2
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	2

## Views of parents and carers

All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire said that they are very happy



**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

with what the Nursery School and the children's centre provides and the education their child receives. They identified in particular that their children feel safe and are happy, positive learners. All praised the care and welfare which their children receive.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at The Wharf Nursery School and Children's 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 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 67 3-4 year old children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	78	8	22	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	92	3	8	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	29	81	7	19	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	81	6	17	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	89	3	8	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	75	8	22	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	81	7	19	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)	29	81	5	14	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	78	7	19	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	75	7	19	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	81	5	14	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	34	94	2	6	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	92	2	6	1	3	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.**



15 June 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of The Wharf Nursery School and Children's Centre Godalming GU7 2LF

It was lovely to meet you when I came to visit you. The Nursery provides a good start to your education. There are many things which you do well.

- You are very happy and like coming to Nursery. You come in so happily and get straight down to the activities on offer. You obviously enjoy learning there.
- There are many interesting things for you to do. It was lovely to see so many of you watering the plants, and each other, and the concentration on your faces when you were playing with the train set and mending the bikes.
- You really enjoy playing outside. Some of you ride the bikes very well.
- Your teachers look after you very well and arrange many different activities for you to try out.
- You receive excellent care during your time at the centre, particularly those of you who have more learning needs or difficulties.
- There are very good links between what you do at Nursery and home. I know that your parents are very pleased with the Nursery.

Even in good schools and Nurseries there are always things that can be improved so I have asked the teachers to look at the way they record the things that you are able to do and to make sure that they do this regularly. I have also asked everyone to try and improve the way that they let you and your parents know how you are doing and what you need to do to get even better.

I hope you continue to enjoy Nursery School and that you enjoy the new building when it is ready

Yours sincerely

Sue Vale

Lead Inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**