

# The Boston Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126564
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	341000
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lynne Blakelock

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>	3–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	91
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alistair Godwin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Heather Steed
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 February 2007
<b>School address</b>	Church Road Boston PE21 0LJ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who observed the three teachers and five teaching assistants, four of whom are key workers, over eight lessons. Meetings were held with a group of children, staff and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation relating to safeguarding, information about the children's attainment and progress, and the school improvement plan. Questionnaires from 42 parents and from 8 staff were analysed.

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

- the progress that the children make from their starting points and the key factors in this
- how effectively assessment is used, both in planning for learning and evaluating the quality of learning, in order to accelerate the children's progress
- the extent to which the school's provision enables the children to benefit from its culturally diverse intake

## Information about the school

Children join the school which is situated on the Woad Farm estate, close to the city centre, from the September of their third birthday. There are 80 part-time and 24 full-time places. Most children attend on a part-time basis and 14 children attend for the whole day. The school is piloting the three hour flexible entitlement for 3-4 year old children. A minority of the children speak English as an additional language and seven languages are represented. An average proportion of children have special educational needs and/or disabilities, of which most are moderate learning difficulties and some are behavioural, social or emotional difficulties. The school achieved Healthy School status in 2007. This year it has achieved the Quality Mark for Early Years for the third time. The school, which is part of the Boston Children's Centre, holds Extended Services status. This has been developed since the last inspection, and includes the Peers Early Education Partnership (PEEP).

**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

This outstanding school provides the children with an excellent start to their education. It is an inclusive school which caters equally well for the children, whatever their learning needs, talents or disabilities so that they all thrive. Through consistently good and often outstanding teaching, an excellent curriculum and exceptional care, guidance and support, the children's achievements are outstanding, given their lower than expected starting points. The children's behaviour is exceptional within an ethos of support and high expectations.

Opportunities to promote further the children's outstanding personal development are incorporated into all aspects of learning, resulting in their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school uses the cultural diversity of the children to develop their knowledge, understanding and empathy of the lifestyles and beliefs of others exceptionally well. The celebrations of religious festivals, for example, involve their families. This factor and the weaving of how we live into daily learning, ensure that the children gain a keen awareness, through first-hand experiences, of the lifestyles, clothing, special foods and beliefs of the children that they play and learn with.

Outstanding teaching is strengthened by very well thought-out assessment systems which provide staff with regular and accurate information about the children's progress. This does not come across so clearly in written planning, which tends to be focused more on activities than on planning carefully for what pupils are meant to learn and how they will get there. Excellent verbal feedback and displays in the classrooms and outdoors serve as reminders to the children and ensure that they know the next steps in learning. Their sound literacy, numeracy and computer skills, together with their rapidly developing competences in cooperating with each other and making decisions and their above average attendance, mean that they are well prepared for primary school.

The headteacher's excellent leadership and management and great determination to provide for the needs of every child have led to the school constantly evolving, particularly in its provision. The programmes for children of all abilities, including initiatives by outside providers, accelerate their progress and give them great confidence. Backed up by very robust monitoring of the school's work and very accurate self evaluation, the continuing excellent progress of the children, the great commitment and efforts of the staff, and the effective governing body, the school has an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

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

- Ensure that written planning for learning focuses to a greater extent on what the

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children are meant to learn and how they will get there.

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

**1**

All groups of children achieve outstandingly well. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make excellent progress because provision, and support and guidance are extremely carefully adapted and highly relevant to their needs. From the start of the day the bright, vibrant environment draws the children into learning, often building on from their own experiences of daily life. Thus, the visit of a vet reminded them of their own injured or ill pets, how they felt when they were unwell and the importance of caring for animals as well as humans. No opportunity is wasted. Consequently, during circle time, the children practised saying good morning, wrote their names on a white board, counted while exercising and found out about school uniform and how to wear it. They have many opportunities to learn for themselves and to take responsibility for their learning. They showed amazement when discovering that the seed potatoes that they planted had resulted in lots of potatoes that they dug up, counted, washed, helped to cook and tasted. The children show particular enthusiasm for learning, particularly evident in practising letters and sounds, which some say at every opportunity. A group of higher attaining children were observed developing their emerging writing skills and practising their drawing skills as they worked on an alternative ending to a favourite story.

Children's' excellent personal development is built in to all learning, based on being considerate and supportive of others and working together. They are delighted to be given jobs to do and carry them out conscientiously. The children are increasingly able to explain why school rules are important and are keen to see them enforced. As they learn the importance of living healthily, and exercise vigorously, they are proud to be able to say why, for example, vegetables are good for them to eat and to make healthy choices. Their quite detailed knowledge and the school's nutritious lunches support the school's Healthy School status. The children have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and show this most consistently as they move round the school. Activities such as handling money on school trips, shopping for ingredients for a cooking lesson and visitors talking about their jobs give the children a clear focus on skills that they need as they get older. Fund-raising adds to their numeracy skills and their empathy for children less fortunate than themselves.

*These are the grades for children's outcomes*

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
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<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>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>	3
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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</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?

Teaching is very effective. Children learn from the staff to be supportive of the other children and most children are very confident to make suggestions and try out new skills. The staff know the children's interests and needs well and activities are carefully chosen to accelerate the children's progress. There is a brisk pace to learning and the children remain interested and motivated because learning is fun. An excellent range of resources, both indoors and outdoors, promote high quality learning. Questioning by the staff is usually very specific, helping the children to make fast progress. High quality teaching is also demonstrated in the teachers' focus on meeting specific skills through the extended services provision.

Planning of activities caters very closely for the varying learning and development needs of the children. One-to-one tuition, for example, is sharply focused on improving specific skills and more able children, those speaking English as a second language and those who find aspects of learning difficult, are exceptionally well provided for. The staff take great care to provide activities that match the children's interests and help them to develop a love of learning. Such activities offer a good balance of teacher-led and child-initiated learning and enable the children to develop their knowledge and understanding across all aspects of learning. Care is taken to ensure that the children who attend for full-days are catered for in the range of activities and opportunities. Information and communication technology is used daily and most effectively so that the children learn specific computer skills, such as using a mouse and also use it to practise new skills, such as counting into double figures. Special weeks, such as mathematics and book weeks, enable the children to broaden their skills and discover new interests.

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Visitors add to their delight, with a visiting nurse and a police officer regularly reinforcing how to keep safe and healthy. Regular exercise is a priority, with the children enjoying opportunities to keep fit through, for example, yoga. The outdoors area has been carefully planned to provide a seamless transition from the classroom and the activities offer excellent learning opportunities across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

The excellent nurturing by the highly committed staff is a major factor in children's outstanding progress. Parents and carers are also key partners. They are highly regarded by the school, which gives them regular opportunities to be involved, and the knowledge and opportunities for them to support their children's learning. This starts with excellent transition into the school. The children benefit from the care and high expectations of their key workers, within a culture of support and encouragement so that they grow in confidence and self-esteem. This starts with each child being allocated a 'buddy' on their arrival. The school works exceptionally well with outside agencies to strengthen the provision and support for the children's individual needs. Highly effective small group arrangements for those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or who are at the early stages of learning English, enable their progress to accelerate. Children with emotional or social and behavioural difficulties have similarly very appropriate support so that by the time they start primary school, any issues have largely been resolved.

*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?**

This is a very forward-looking school which is determined to provide a high quality education for all of the children that it serves. Indeed, the school promotes excellent equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination robustly, not only by ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all the school offers so their achievements are equally outstanding, but by showing that they value all of the children for who they are and their uniqueness. An example of this is its participation in a local ICT project to extend the computer skills of the more able children and those who find it difficult to engage in learning. The staff share the same drive for improvement, as the outstanding headteacher, and ambition is embedded through the school. They feel valued through their involvement in planning for the future, which is based on rigorous monitoring of

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the school's work, and in regular professional development opportunities which ensure their secure understanding of how children develop. The governing body oversees safeguarding procedures well because it monitors and evaluates the school's practices robustly. Overall it is effective in overseeing the school's work. The Chair of the Governing Body has a thorough knowledge and understanding of what the school does and is able to offer the school direction for its future. The children's knowledge of the richness of the world is integral to the school's community cohesion programme, which promotes their strong understanding of its local and international context. National links are part of a developing programme

*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>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>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>	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>	1

## Views of parents and carers

Of the minority who responded to the questionnaire, there was unanimous support for several aspects of the school's work, including leadership and management, and the quality of teaching. In all other responses, parents and carers were overwhelmingly supportive of what the school does. One parent and carer described the school as, 'A great place to introduce children to school.' Another wrote of the approachability of the staff, 'Who make sure that parents feel part of the team.' Another positive comment referred to 'The weekly curriculum planning sheet that is very helpful to parents in supporting their child's learning.' The very small number of concerns mostly related to whether more able children were receiving suitable work. The inspection found that they



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were. However, the responses to the questionnaire have been shared with the headteacher, while preserving the anonymity of both the parents and carers, and the children.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at The Boston 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 inspection team received 42 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 91 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	74	11	26	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	76	10	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	71	12	29	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	57	17	40	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	71	12	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	55	18	43	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	64	15	36	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)	26	62	15	36	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	67	13	31	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	64	15	36	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	57	17	40	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	60	17	40	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	74	11	26	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.**



15 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Boston Nursery School, Boston, PE21 0LJ

We had a lovely time when we visited you recently. Thank you for showing us around and telling us all of the things you like about the school. We liked lots of things. We think you are lucky to have such a super outside area in which to play and learn. We were impressed by your vegetable garden and the number of potatoes that you have grown. We are also pleased that you know a lot about eating healthily and that you behave so well. Here are some of the main things that we found out about your school:

- your school is outstanding
- you make excellent progress because teaching is outstanding
- your headteacher leads the school extremely well
- the staff work very hard for you and look after you and care for you really well
- the staff make sure that activities are interesting and fun
- the outdoor area is excellent because there are lots of really interesting things to do and learn
- there are excellent partnerships between the school and your parents and carers
- you learn a lot about the different beliefs and lifestyles of the other children
- you play and learn very well with each other

Your school is always trying to be better. There is one important way it can improve. Although the staff know the levels at which you work, this is not often written in lesson plans. I have asked your headteacher to have a look at this.

I send you my best wishes and hope that those of you who are moving to primary school are very happy there. Keep doing your best

Yours sincerely

Lynne Blakelock

Lead inspector

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