

Lanterns Children's Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134844
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	341538
Inspection dates	4–5 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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	Community
Age range of pupils	2–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	99
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mollie White
Headteacher	Olivia Peak
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2007
School address	Berewecke Road Winchester SO22 6AJ
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Age group	2–5
Inspection dates	4–5 May 2010
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**Number of children on roll in the registered
childcare provision****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 visited six activities where direct teaching by five different key workers took place and observed a considerable number of other activities in which the children were engaged. They held meetings with governors and staff and spoke to children informally. A small number of parents bringing their children to the nursery were also spoken to. Inspectors looked at analyses of children's progress, development planning and monitoring, local authority reports, a range of policies and procedures, including those associated with safeguarding, and curriculum planning documents. They also scrutinised questionnaires returned by 36 parents and 19 staff.

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

- The extent to which the nursery is improving children's progress in problem solving, reasoning and number and their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- How well children gain an understanding of the diverse nature of society.

Information about the school

The nursery is part of Lanterns Children's Centre. There are two classes of mainly part time children attending for the morning or afternoon sessions, with children organised into small groups led by a key worker. The centre houses care for two to three year olds and is run by a private provider. It also runs a range of specialist support services and parental/carer support groups, including a family learning programme. These aspects were not inspected.

The majority of nursery children are admitted in the September following their third birthday and spend three terms in the nursery. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is high, with the majority having speech, language and communication needs. The nursery also provides outreach services for special education needs and/or disabilities to local pre-schools and schools. A very small minority of children speak English as an additional language.

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 is an outstanding nursery which children love coming to and where they thrive in its caring and supportive ethos. Parents and carers are full of praise for the nursery and its staff, typically commenting, "The most brilliant, best nursery I've seen," and "This is a magnificent school with wonderful teachers and facilities."

What stands out amongst many strengths is the commitment of staff to provide an excellent level of education and care for all children whatever their needs or talents. They achieve this exceptionally well. Children with specific learning or language needs do as well as their peers and the more able children attain high standards. All children make outstanding progress, developing confidence and self-esteem and an excellent attitude to learning. Their behaviour is outstanding and they are very kind to, and supportive of, other children. Children are exceptionally well prepared for their move to primary school, having made excellent gains in early literacy and numeracy skills and exceeding the attainment levels expected for their age. Very effective strategies put in place over the past 18 months have ensured that children make as good gains in their problem solving, reasoning and number skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world as they do in other areas.

Nursery staff are highly skilled educators who have an excellent understanding of how young children learn. They use the outstanding accommodation to especially good effect to help children gain new skills and discover things for themselves. For example, children loved singing along to the karaoke machine in their talent show set up in the role-play area. The rich and stimulating environment develops a thirst for learning. Children were enthralled to discover some "very large eggs" and to try and find out what had laid them. Two boys very thoughtfully covered them with sand and leaves, remembering that eggs need to be kept warm if they are going to hatch.

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and she is exceptionally well supported by staff and governors in continually evaluating and improving the nursery's work. In this they have been very successful, which gives confidence that the nursery has excellent capacity to maintain and extend its high quality provision. The attention given to ensuring that children are safe and free from harm at all times is excellent. Nursery children and their families also benefit greatly from the other services provided by the centre and the many opportunities to liaise with the local community. Children are well aware of the diverse nature of the global society, but do not have enough opportunities to contribute to it. Staff and governors recognise that this is an area to develop.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Help children to make a greater contribution to the global society by finding out more about ways in which people in this country can make a difference.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

1

Children do exceptionally well in all areas of learning. Personal and social skills are given very high priority so that children quickly develop confidence and independence and work and play very happily together. Children are exceptionally keen to come to the nursery, secure in leaving their parents. Despite attendance being non-statutory, the levels of attendance are good and staff continue to discourage term-time holidays.

Throughout all activities, adults engage children in conversation, helping them to develop language skills exceptionally well. This has considerable benefits for those children who have speech and communication needs and those who speak English as an additional language who come on in leaps and bounds in this aspect of their development. In sessions led by key workers, there is an excellent focus on developing basic literacy and numeracy skills. Through these, children can recognise the sounds in words and identify others with the same sound. The vast majority of children count quantities to 10, with the more able confident that four is two less than six. Older children record some of their work exceptionally well, not only writing their own name, but attempting to build up other words using sounds. These strengths help ensure that, by the time children move on to primary school, attainment is above the expected level despite it being below this on entry.

Art, music and drama activities are very popular, with children becoming very creative, thoughtfully playing different roles and having great fun with musical instruments, keeping time very well. The outstanding outdoor accommodation is used to especially good effect, helping children make great gains in their physical development and awareness of how to keep healthy and safe. They love rolling down the mounds, carefully travelling across ladders on the apparatus and safely riding the wheeled toys around the track. Finding out new things about the world around them is a source of great delight. Children love tasting food from different cultures and their sense of awe and wonder is enhanced through being able to see and touch baby animals and ask a wealth of questions about what they do and eat.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

1

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

Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Children's attainment ¹	1
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
The extent to which children feel safe	1
Children's behaviour	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Children's attendance ¹	2
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Children's activities are planned exceptionally well because of the excellent check kept on their progress. This ensures new tasks are especially well designed to move children on in their learning. Very good consideration has been given to the wide range of ability and diverse needs of children. As a result, there are some occasions when children of similar ability work together in a small group with their key worker. This has considerable benefits for all children, including those who have specific needs or talents, as their learning is very focused. For example, story time for children with speech, language or communication needs provides a wealth of opportunities for children to talk. All children learn the sign language Makaton which allows children with poor language skills to communicate with other children as well as adults, ensuring that they are exceptionally well included in all activities. Story time is always an exciting activity where children can learn new things across a range of areas. For example, a group of more able children were able to use a number fan to identify those they saw in the story and to predict the sequence.

Adults are exceptionally skilled at helping the children discover new things for themselves by very careful questioning or in giving them a pertinent clue. For example, when looking at the tadpoles with their key worker, children identified that one had developed two legs at the side on the front of its body and its tail was getting smaller. This then led to an excellent discussion of what might happen next.

Equally good thought is given to providing a range of activities that children can do independently. Children are used to succeeding in difficult tasks and set themselves challenges such as building the longest toy train they can successfully move round the

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track. Staff are exceptionally good at knowing where to intervene when necessary to help children make the very best progress that they can.

Children are especially well cared for, and liaison with a range of other agencies and professionals means they receive the very best support for their particular needs. The outcomes of this are evident in the confidence and maturity with which children with Downs syndrome help to plan their own activities. Arrangements for helping children start nursery and move on to their next school are excellent. This ensures children settle very quickly as was observed when, on her second afternoon in the nursery, one new child happily went off to join in activities.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The care and commitment of staff and governors is evident in all their work. Teamwork is outstanding, with all successfully working towards the goal of ensuring that each child will gain the greatest benefit from their time in the nursery. Staff and governors are continually seeking new ways in which to enhance the quality of provision. A revised tracking system introduced last year has helped staff refine self-evaluation by providing an excellent picture of how well children are progressing and to successfully target weaker groups or areas of learning. This has had a marked impact on improving the progress of higher attaining children and aspects such as calculation and information and communication technology. Excellent monitoring ensures there is a very good awareness of where further improvement is needed, with plans already in place to address this. For example, although cohesion is very well established with the local community, links have been arranged with a national agency to help children learn about fair trade with other countries and the difference they can make by supporting a more equitable society.

The nursery has been exceptionally successful in creating a cohesive and supportive environment. This, together with the attention given to individual children's needs, means that the equality of opportunity is outstanding. Children benefit considerably from the different agencies based in the centre and staff work very closely with others such as social services to help secure a high quality level of care and education. An excellent range of policies and procedures, including the outstanding health and safety checks, ensure that the safeguarding of children is of very high quality. Without

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exception, parents and carers feel that the nursery has built up an excellent relationship with them and that they are very involved in supporting their children's learning. In particular, they appreciate the staggered entry time which gives them opportunities to speak with key workers. Parents also greatly value the considerable number of photographs of their children's activities they are given.

Governors are exceptionally supportive of the nursery and play an important role in helping set up and monitor development priorities such as those for community cohesion. They consult widely with parents and freely give of their considerable expertise, for example with regard to special educational needs.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

Although questionnaires were only returned by a minority of parents, evidence from the nursery's own consultation indicates an extremely high level of satisfaction. Those parents spoken to had nothing but praise for the nursery and its staff and are confident that the quality of education and care is outstanding. Major strengths parents identified include:

- children's enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning
- the excellent education their children receive
- the way the nursery liaises with them, especially through the key workers
- the excellent accommodation, especially the outdoor area.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Lanterns 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 99 children registered at the nursery.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	81	7	19	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	89	3	8	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	26	72	10	28	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	67	12	33	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	83	6	17	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	69	11	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	69	11	31	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)	22	61	11	31	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	75	8	22	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	64	10	28	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	72	10	28	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	78	8	22	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	92	3	8	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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). 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:	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. ■ 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.



6 May 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Lanterns Children's Centre, Winchester SO22 6AJ

Thank you for welcoming us to your nursery. We had a wonderful time talking to you and seeing all the things you do. We think the nursery is excellent and are very pleased that you and your parents and carers think so too.

Here are some of the things we found out were especially good about the nursery:

- All of you do really well. We were very impressed by how well you can count and recognise the different sounds in words.
- Staff are especially good at helping those of you who find learning difficult.
- You have lots of very exciting things to do, especially in the outside area. I had a great time with you stroking the baby lambs and wondering which bird could have laid the VERY LARGE eggs you found.
- Adults are excellent at helping you to learn new things.
- You are very happy, extremely well behaved and work hard. We were especially impressed by how kind you are to other children and how well you work on your own.
- Staff look after you really well and you are very safe in the nursery.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors are excellent at helping your nursery to keep getting better all the time.

There is nothing really important that staff and governors need to do now, but we agree with them that it would help if you could find out more about what you can do to make sure that people in other countries get a fair chance like you do.

Yours sincerely

D Wilkinson

Lead Inspector

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