

Dorking Nursery School Sure Start Children's Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124912
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	340681
Inspection dates	20–21 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Beryl Richmond

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 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	68
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandy Horvath
Headteacher	Susan Beckett
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2007
School address	West Street Dorking RH4 1BY
Telephone number	01306 882397
Fax number	01306 882397
Email address	head@dorking.surrey.sch.uk

Registered childcare provision	Two- to three-year-olds Nursery
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	32
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	NA

Age group	2–5 years
Inspection date(s)	20–21 January 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons. Meetings were held with the chair of governors, with the governor responsible for safeguarding and with members of the senior leadership team. The school's documentation was scrutinised and account was taken of the 60 questionnaires completed by parents and carers and the 27 questionnaires completed by the members of staff.

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

- effectiveness of the senior leadership team in extending the nursery school to include younger children so that provision and outcomes are consistently of high quality
- effectiveness of the extension of opportunities for children to develop mathematically both indoors and outdoors
- achievement of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to determine whether teaching is sufficiently focused and effective.

Information about the school

Dorking Nursery School Sure Start Children's Centre has been extended to include a Nursery class for two to three year olds and has become a designated children's centre since the last inspection. There has been a major refurbishment of the building in order to provide more services. There is specialist provision for up to 16 children with significant special educational needs and/or disabilities in the three- to five-year-olds Nursery. Their needs relate mainly to speech and language difficulties and/or autism. The school serves the town of Dorking and the wider community. It prioritises the admission of children with specific needs and provides priority places for two year olds. A broad range of services is provided for parents and carers in the centre, which are inspected separately. A new senior leadership team was established in 2008.

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

Dorking Nursery School Sure Start Children's Centre has maintained its excellent effectiveness reported at its last inspection. This is because the school has experienced, knowledgeable leaders and managers who are not complacent. They constantly strive to make the school even better by rigorously evaluating its effectiveness on a regular basis. The headteacher has the full respect of the school community. She consults widely before bringing about change, and consequently is able to carry through developments very successfully. The two- to three-year-olds Nursery is very well established and there is consistency in quality of provision and outcomes throughout the school. The staff are a cohesive team who are supportive of each other, with responsibility for school improvement being very effectively and widely shared. Because of these factors, capacity for further improvement is outstanding. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. A typical comment is 'This is a fantastic nursery. The outstanding child centred approach of the headteacher is clearly filtered down to all staff. The children are always the main focus.'

Children's starting points are well below those expected for their ages. They achieve extremely well in all areas of learning but particularly so in their personal, social and emotional development and in their development of language and communication skills. This is because the school is organised to promote these aspects, with appropriate vocabulary displayed and staff taking every opportunity to develop children's communication skills through questioning and modelling of language. Children's attainment is in line with the national average. This is only part of the picture though because about one third of the year group have significant special needs and although they achieve very well, they do not reach the standard expected. The attainment of the other children is above average, with some more able children attaining some of the Early Learning Goals about one year earlier than expected.

The school has focused very well on developing opportunities for children to develop their problem solving, reasoning and number skills when playing indoors or outdoors in the very well resourced garden areas. Consequently, this area for improvement, identified at the last inspection, has been addressed very well.

Teaching is excellent and the curriculum has many strengths. However, while children have good opportunities to use information and communication technology, for example children photographed their visit to the supermarket using a digital camera, staff recognise that this is an area that could improve even more.

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Provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is excellent because they benefit from specialist provision in their own classrooms and also from sharing activities with children in the main nursery, where they are very well integrated. A knowledgeable, experienced member of staff leads this area of the school's work extremely well. Parents are very supportive in this regard, by working on targets with their children at home.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend children's opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

1

Happy and extremely well-behaved children enjoy their time in school and achieve extremely well. Children attain the standards they are capable of in each area of learning because the staff have high expectations and know the children well. This means that children in the specialist provision for special educational needs attain a higher level in some areas of learning depending on their needs. Children attend school regularly, with illness being the main reason for absence. They develop skills of independence, taking responsibility and decision-making very seriously. Parents comment on how confident their children have become since joining the school. Children know that they should hold an adult's hand when on visits and have excellent knowledge of how to stay healthy. School lunches are hot, healthy meals, served in a small dining room, decorated with children's artwork, with tablecloths and individual place names for each child. Consequently, children develop their social skills very well, all of which is preparing them well for when they move on in their education.

Children self-register competently using a system with photographs for the younger children and name cards for the older children. Through role-play opportunities, children learn very well about road safety and about their community by shopping in a local supermarket. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Their curiosity is encouraged extremely well. Comments made by the children during a visit to the Forest School demonstrate their thoughtfulness about the wonder of nature. Children learn very well about different cultures by learning about the religions of children who attend the nursery, for example, the festival of Eid. They learn very well about the lives of children in Hong Kong because of the meaningful links that exist. Children make an excellent contribution to the community in various ways, including by gardening and by having a very strong input into the curriculum. For example, one child's interest in the cinema led to one of the role-play areas being set up as a cinema the next day.

The children in the special needs specialist provision are making great strides especially in their personal and language development because the staff know these

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children extremely well and are very encouraging of their efforts.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment ¹	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
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?

Teaching is excellent because teachers plan extremely well in teams, roles are clearly defined and consequently children's needs are met very well. Relationships are excellent and so children learn in a harmonious environment. New members of staff are inducted quickly and very well because there are excellent role models. The curriculum is good with some outstanding elements. Outdoor learning is given a high priority and both gardens are very well resourced. There is an excellent range of books available to children and a well-established library system so that parents can read with their children at home. There are not enough opportunities for children to use a wide range of information and communication technology equipment, like interactive whiteboards, independently.

Pastoral care is excellent. Each child has a key person who knows the child and its family extremely well. Every child is visited at home before they start school. Parents have commented positively on how well their children settle in and how well they are prepared for the next stage in their learning. Effective individual programmes are set up for children who find it hard to settle. Attendance is checked on a regular basis and excellent systems are in place. Detailed observations are part of daily practice and also there is an excellent focus on specific children on a rota basis to check on

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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progress. All of this work contributes very well to children's detailed records, which are cross-referenced across the six areas of learning and also contain photographic evidence of progress. The input of parents is particularly valued and contributes very well to building up a full picture of a child. Children have their own record books, which they value and are keen to share.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Widely shared responsibility for leadership and management is very effective in ensuring consistency in the quality of provision throughout the school. Self-evaluation is part of all that the school does and leads to very well focused, measurable objectives in its development plan. The ethos is extremely well understood by the whole school community and is evident everywhere. Teaching is rigorously and regularly monitored and responsibility for this is widely shared. The governing body has recently had some changes in membership, including the Chair of the Governing Body. Experienced members are providing good continuity during a time of change. The governing body is working to ensure that all of its monitoring is of the same excellent quality seen in some areas of its work. Safeguarding is good because although all statutory requirements are fully in place, some new governors have not yet completed their training. The school has excellent links with parents, who are fully involved in their children's development. For example, ongoing dialogue, opportunities to discuss children's progress and reporting arrangements give parents a very clear picture of their child. On site there are a wide range of activities, which are beneficial to parents and which help the staff develop very effective relationships with them. Partnerships with other organisations and agencies have an excellent impact on learning and well-being. For example, the school has been successful in arranging for doctors to observe children in school to get a better picture of children's needs, and support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is tailored carefully for them. Community cohesion is promoted well. The school itself is a socially diverse, cohesive community with particularly good links with communities in Hong Kong and Africa. Discrimination is not tolerated and all children are given the best opportunity to develop as well as possible.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation	1
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Stage	
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	2
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	2
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

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work. They are particularly pleased with the way the school keeps their children safe and the way that the school is led and managed. This is very much in line with the inspection team's view of the school's effectiveness. The reason why there are fewer responses to question 8 is because the original questionnaire sent to the school for distribution to parents and carers did not contain this question. Subsequently a second questionnaire was issued which resulted in a much lower response rate to question 8.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Dorking Nursery School Sure Start 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 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 100 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	48	80	12	20	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	55	92	5	8	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	62	23	38	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	70	17	28	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	80	12	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	70	18	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	77	13	22	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)	18	30	11	18	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	73	16	27	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	63	19	32	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	68	19	32	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	54	90	6	10	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	85	9	15	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 all its children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its children. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

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

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

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

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

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



25 January 2010

Dear Children

**Inspection of Dorking Nursery School Sure Start Children's Centre,
Dorking, RH4 1BY**

We very much enjoyed visiting your school and thank you for making us welcome. We think that you go to an excellent nursery school where you enjoy lots of exciting activities in your classrooms, in your gardens and for the older children at the Forest School. Very many of your parents filled in questionnaires saying that they agree with us that you go to a very good nursery school. Adults in your school know you extremely well and prepare lots of activities for you that they know you will enjoy and will help you to learn. You are taught extremely well by very caring adults. This is why you learn new things very well, especially skills that will help you a lot as you grow up. We were very impressed by your excellent behaviour and kindness to each other. All of you get along very well with each other. Your headteacher and all the other adults in your school are always thinking of new ways to improve your school and they are very good at making changes.

To make it even better, we have asked your school to give you more opportunities to use electronic equipment like computers and cameras to help you learn.

You can continue to help your school by thinking up new ideas for how you would like to learn.

Yours sincerely

Beryl Richmond
Lead inspector

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