

Flagg Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	112481
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	378494
Inspection dates	24–25 January 2012
Lead inspector	Susan Walsh

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 sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	20
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marian French
Headteacher	Sarah Brown (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	15 June 2009
School address	Main Road Flagg Buxton SK17 9QT
Telephone number	01298 85208
Fax number	01298 85208
Email address	info@flagg.derbyshire.sch.uk

Registered childcare provision	EY381752 Little Links
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	14
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	6 July 2009

Age group	3–4
Inspection date(s)	24–25 January 2012
Inspection number	378494



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Introduction

Inspection team

Susan Walsh

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days notice. The inspector visited 12 sessions, including childcare sessions and saw seven members of the school's staff teach. Meetings were held with staff and governors. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. She observed the work of the school and the childcare provision, and looked at the school's development plans, minutes of governing body meetings and the school's records of children's progress. Questionnaires completed by 26 parents and carers were analysed as well as questionnaires from staff.

Information about the school

This is a very small nursery school serving several rural villages in North West Derbyshire. All children are of White British heritage. The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs is below average. The governing body also manages extended provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This includes a breakfast club, lunchtime 'Flagg Tractor Club' and 'Little Links' childcare for children age two to four. The school also supports 'Tiddleypeeps', a parent and child group that meets in the adjacent village hall, by providing staff. These are all reported on in this report. The previous headteacher retired at the end of December 2011. The qualified teacher has very recently taken on the role of the acting head teacher. Arrangements for appointing a new headteacher were not finalised at the time of the inspection. The school has achieved Healthy School status.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. Parents and carers are right to be highly delighted with the nursery and are accurate when they frequently use the word 'fantastic' to describe the quality of provision. Children make outstanding progress in all areas of learning and as a result their skills are frequently above those expected for their age and their achievement is outstanding.
- Teaching is outstanding. Staff have an excellent understanding of how young children learn. Activities are always exciting and interesting and are carefully matched to children's needs. The outstanding curriculum also makes a substantial contribution to children's outstanding achievement and their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Children's behaviour is outstanding both in lessons and around school, showing their well-developed sense of security. They are very enthusiastic about learning and very much enjoy coming to nursery. The childcare facility is also excellent at promoting children's personal development and ensuring that they are well prepared for school.
- Very clear routines combined with a skilled and conscientious staff team means that the nursery runs very smoothly and effectively. However, the acting headteacher teaches full time and has insufficient time to undertake some important monitoring and evaluation tasks that will help the school to sustain its outstanding provision. The school does not have a clear overview of children's attainment on entry and the extensive data about the progress of individual children is not used effectively to gain an overview of progress over time. The skills needed to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning effectively are at an early stage of development. The provision in Tiddleypeeps does not fully reflect the very high quality work seen in the rest of the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rigour of monitoring and evaluation and therefore the capacity for

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further improvement by:

- making certain that the acting headteacher has sufficient time to carry out management tasks
- making sure the school has a robust overview of children's attainment on entry and progress over time
- developing the skills needed to carry out robust lesson observations
- reviewing provision in Tiddleypeeps to make sure it fully reflects the outstanding provision in the rest of the school.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers are absolutely correct when they say that their children are making outstanding progress when they attend the nursery. By the time children leave the school to join primary school, their skills are consistently above those expected for their age in all areas of learning including reading. Although their skills in writing are often above those expected they are not quite as high as their skills in other areas of learning. In establishing high quality child care and combining this with outstanding nursery provision, the school has been able rapidly to improve children's skills at a very early stage in their education.

The school provides an environment that is very rich in literature and provides numerous opportunities for children to write; consequently progress in reading and writing has further accelerated. Children are very interested in books and know that print conveys meaning and is read from left to right. The home-made books that contain pictures of themselves taking part in activities and examples of their writing and thoughts create particularly high levels of engagement including from those children who find learning hard. Parents and carers are also encouraged to support their children's interest in reading by taking home story sacks. Additionally there are special sacks that are specifically designed to help children cope with difficult times in their lives. Many children are able to link letters to sounds, quickly identifying the first letter in their name and in the names of their class mates. Some are already able to write their name on their work. There are plentiful opportunities to write in lessons, for example, when children pretend to make hairdressing appointments in the role play area.

Children's progress in mathematics has accelerated further because staff are now ensuring that the understanding of number is frequently reinforced. The improvement in skills can be seen in the way that children love to count. Many can now count to five and some can even count to ten and are starting to think about addition and subtraction. Disabled children and those who have special educational needs and those who find learning challenging make outstanding progress. This is because the activities provided are carefully matched to their needs. Staff are proficient at modelling language, reshaping explanations and ensuring that these children are always fully involved in learning. Parents and carers report that staff

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ensure that any specialist advice or programmes are reinforced in the Nursery.

Quality of teaching

As a result of outstanding teaching, all children, including disabled children and those who have special educational needs, achieve exceptionally well over time. Parents and carers correctly say that teaching is excellent and many comment on the wide range of exciting activities that are available in school. Adults support learning extremely well within a very supportive and caring environment. Very close attention is paid to meeting children's individual needs. For example, all children have carefully-considered targets for where they need to improve the most in their personal development, literacy and their understanding of number. Staff are very accomplished at questioning children. Their questions are carefully matched to each child's individual requirements and successfully extend children's learning. They are also very sensitive to when a child might be about to lose concentration and intervene at exactly the right moment. This means that children are able to develop independence but are never left unoccupied. In this way every minute spent at nursery is maximised and is used as a valuable time for learning.

Many opportunities are taken to enhance children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and increase their appreciation of the world around them. Children are usually keen to try new experiences; when they are reluctant to try something new they are gently encouraged by staff to broaden their horizons. Teaching and the curriculum are carefully focused on developing early reading and writing skills as well as children's understanding of number. Every opportunity is taken to develop these skills. For example, children were encouraged to try different types of topping for porridge during an activity linked to 'farmhouse breakfast week'. Their likes and dislikes were then used to create a tally chart, as well as opportunities to count. There were also opportunities for discussion and for children to write their names on the chart. Many areas of learning were successfully developed in this single session including children's awareness of healthy eating.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The staff have successfully created an ethos which promotes positive attitudes to learning and an environment that allows children to feel safe. Most children attend nursery regularly and parents and carers say that their children are very enthusiastic about coming to school. Staff are warm and friendly and consistently provide role models for learning good behaviour and their expectations are always high; consequently children's behaviour is outstanding. The children have excellent relationships with adults and play well together. Children show high levels of curiosity, and all sustain very high levels of concentration. This makes an important contribution to their swift progress. Children are confident to speak in a group and develop important social skills such as taking turns and working with others. They take an increasing pride in their achievements and their progress in their personal social and emotional development is outstanding.

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Staff take careful note of children's views and make sure children know exactly who they should tell if they have a problem. Children say that they like coming to school and are particularly positive about playing outside. Parents and carers are unanimously positive about children's behaviour and say that bullying is out of their range of experience. They also say that they are confident that if any issues did arise they would be dealt with swiftly and effectively by staff. Children have responded well to the many recent visitors who have taught them about how to keep safe. For example, the police have helped children to understand how to keep themselves out of danger and a crossing patrol man has helped children to learn how to cross the road safely.

Leadership and management

Accelerated progress and rising levels of attainment reflect the high expectations of staff and the governing body, and illustrate the school's good capacity to improve further. Currently, the acting headteacher is teaching full time and has little time to undertake management responsibilities. She has inherited well-focused school development plans that continue to be rigorously implemented and the school is successfully developing the use of the outdoors to promote an understanding of nature and provision for two-year-olds. Many staff have attended numerous courses. They have taken the advice that is most relevant to the needs of children in this school and have rigorously applied it. Consequently, they are highly skilled practitioners. However, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are less robust. This is because staff are relatively inexperienced regarding identifying the links between the quality of teaching and outcomes for children and producing evaluative lesson observations. These skills are necessary in order to identify where this high quality provision could be further developed. The school has useful information about the individual starting points of children and the progress made by individuals. This information is used well to plan activities that move children's learning on and to identify those children who may find learning difficult. It is used less efficiently to obtain a clear picture of attainment on entry to the school and to measure the progress of different cohorts of children over time. Therefore leaders, including school governors, do not have the all the necessary tools that would allow them rapidly to identify any changes to overall rates of progress.

The curriculum is outstanding and meets children's needs very well; it is excellent at promoting children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is an excellent balance between activities that are led by staff and ones that children choose for themselves. Additionally, visits and visitors are used particularly well to ensure that children have plenty of exciting things to talk about. The school is a highly valued part of the local community. For example, it supports a local parent and child group, Tiddleypeeps, by providing staffing. However, the quality of this provision is not as well developed as that in the main school and activities are planned without a clear focus on learning. The school has been successful in developing its work with the wider community in the United Kingdom. Parents and carers were delighted with the way their children quickly made friends with children from different backgrounds than themselves when they visited an inner-city nursery.

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All staff actively promote equality. There is a strong focus on ensuring that every child reaches his or her full potential, irrespective of their level of ability or background, so that there is no discrimination. Therefore, gaps between outcomes for different groups of children are minimal. Staff have a good awareness of safeguarding procedures and are vigilant in their efforts to keep children safe.

The Early Years Foundation Stage delivered in the registered childcare provision

The outstanding care provided totally reflects the high standard of provision in the nursery and involves many of the same staff. The very supportive relationships between children and staff result in happy, well settled and confident children. Children are actively engaged in a wide variety of interesting activities and staff vigorously promote language development, reading, writing and the use of number when children attend the extended care provision. For example, while children were eating their breakfast they were encouraged to recognise words and letters on cereal packets. They found this fun and not only did they recognise the letters in their own names, they were keen to identify the initial letter sounds in their family and friends' names. Behaviour is outstanding and the children's manners were marvellous when they were eating their breakfast and having their dinner with Tractor Club. Children talk confidently about their own lives and are interested in the lives of others. They learn to sustain concentration and to persevere. Children's progress is regularly assessed and the information that is obtained is used well to plan specific activities that address their individual needs. The provision is well managed. The staff form a very cohesive team who are continuously developing their skills. The school now has many children attending for many parts of sessions and although it has records of attendance these are sometimes confusing. While there are well thought out routines for sensitive issues such as nappy changing these have not always been formalised.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage of the registered childcare provision, inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage for the registered provision	2

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 pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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 pupils. 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils 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.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



26 January 2012

Dear Children

Inspection of Flagg Nursery School, Buxton, SK17 9QT

I really enjoyed talking to you when we visited your nursery. You all have lots of fun at nursery and make outstanding progress; that is why your nursery is an outstanding school. It was wonderful to see so many smiling welcoming faces. You are always polite and your behaviour is excellent. You are working very hard, and many of you know your letters and numbers. No wonder you are interested in books and stories - there are so many all around you in nursery. I really liked seeing the home-made books that had so many wonderful pictures of you enjoying very exciting activities, and seeing your writing. The visits from the firemen and the crossing patrol man looked very interesting and it's good to know that you are learning how to keep safe. You are very well looked after including when you are in the Little Links Childcare or eating your lunch with the Tractor Club.

The staff in the Nursery, Little Links and the Tractor Club are doing an excellent job. They always know when you need extra help and ask you questions that help you to learn. Your teacher has just taken over as acting headteacher. She has lots to do but does not always have enough time for management tasks. In order that the school remains outstanding, I have asked staff to make sure they know exactly which skills you have when you join the school and to get a better overall picture of progress over time. I have asked staff to make better checks on teaching and learning and to make sure that the provision in Tiddlypeeps is as good as that seen in the rest of the school.

You can also help your school by coming to nursery every day and trying your very best in every lesson.

Yours sincerely

Susan Walsh
Lead inspector

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