

# Earlham Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	120767
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	380099
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Godfrey Bancroft

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant (Nursery School)
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	183
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Sheridan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Felicity Thomas
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 May 2009
<b>School address</b>	Cadge Road Norwich NR5 8DB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01603 454271
<b>Fax number</b>	01603 251341
<b>Email address</b>	head@earlham-nur.norfolk.sch.uk

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<b>Registered childcare provision</b>	Earlham Day Nursery EY285666
<b>Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision</b>	69
<b>Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision</b>	13 May 2009

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<b>Age group</b>	3–4
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	19–20 March 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	380099



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Godfrey Bancroft

Additional inspector

John Viner

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 11 lessons taught by five teachers and parts of four other lessons. Meetings were held with the headteacher, children, parents and carers, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. In addition to observing the school's work, they looked at self-evaluation documents, notes of recent external evaluations, minutes of governing body meetings and plans for future developments. Inspectors also considered the views recorded in 100 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those submitted by members of staff.

## Information about the school

This is a nursery school of broadly average size. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals, as identified through those who have free provision as two years olds, is high. The percentage of disabled children and those who have special educational needs is also high. These special educational needs include visual and hearing impairment, autism and speech and language difficulties as well as behavioural, social and emotional needs. The percentages of children who come from minority ethnic groups and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are relatively low, but rising steadily. The school is part of Earlham Early Years Centre (Children's Centre) providing integrated nursery education and day care for children aged between 18 months and four years. The Children's Centre, which is managed by the governing body of the school, led by the headteacher and provides for the community through family health and support services and a childminder network, was inspected at the same time as the nursery. The findings of that inspection are published in a separate report.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>1</b>

## Key findings

- This is an outstanding school in which children thrive in their personal development and successfully acquire the early basic skills that will serve them well in the future. Parents and carers are delighted with the quality of education provided. Every respondent to the inspection questionnaire said they would recommend the school to another parent.
- Achievement is outstanding with children making exceptional progress in all areas of their learning. This is particularly evident in their personal, social and emotional development, in communication, language and literacy and in their physical development.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistants plan activities in all areas of children’s learning that are matched precisely to the various stages that each child has reached. Early knowledge of number is taught exceptionally well, but there are too few opportunities for children to develop their understanding of number patterns during their play and work. Adults assess children’s progress frequently and accurately and are swift to respond to the needs of any who show the slightest sign of falling behind.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Children are enthusiastic learners who play and work together exceptionally well. From a very young age, they learn how to care for each other and to show sensitivity for the needs of others. However, while attending is not a statutory requirement, levels of attendance are low.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher provides inspirational leadership, enabling her colleagues to do their best for every child. The governing body provides the school with high quality support and guidance. Exemplary aspects of provision include a range of learning activities that capture children’s imagination and enthusiasm, the use of the school grounds for outdoor learning and the promotion of children’s spiritual, moral,

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social and cultural development.

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

- Build on the already good work and existing procedures to support parents and carers in ensuring their children attend school as frequently as possible.
- Increase the range of opportunities for children to develop their understanding of number patterns during their play and work.

## **Main report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

Achievement is outstanding. Children join the nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of learning that are much lower than expected for their age; but particularly so in their personal, social and emotional development and their communication, language and literacy. The school has accurate evidence to affirm this picture of attainment on entry. Every parent and carer who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt that their children are making good progress. One parent commented, 'I'm very pleased with my child's development. He has learnt so much and developed so many interests.' Inspection findings agree with this view, in that progress is outstanding in every area of children's learning. Exceptional progress is clearly evident in the key areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and in physical development. By the time children are ready to move to the Reception Year at the primary school, their skills, knowledge and understanding are still a little lower than expected for their age. However, evidence provided by the primary school shows that attainment is improving year by year and the gap with national expectations has narrowed significantly.

Children who are disabled, those who have special educational needs and the increasing number who come from homes where English is spoken as an additional language all make outstanding progress. This is because learning opportunities are matched precisely to their needs and stage of development. Children's early reading skills are promoted very effectively and they quickly develop a passion for books and stories. The 'book of the month' project has proved to be exceptionally effective in supporting parents and carers in promoting their children's reading.

### **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching is outstanding: a view which is supported by all parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire. Teachers and teaching assistants believe that every child can succeed. They give children the confidence to learn by consistently celebrating their every effort and success. Activities across all areas of learning are tailored precisely to the needs of each child. Children's progress

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is monitored meticulously each day. All adults contribute to the recording of developments. Observations are collated by the 'key person' responsible for each child and significant events and progress are detailed in children's learning journey records. The contents of the learning journey, which charts the progress of each child throughout their time in the school, are a source of great excitement and pride for children and for their parents and carers. The highly effective assessment procedures are central to the early identification of any child who might be at risk of falling behind, including those who are disabled and those who have special educational needs.

Teachers promote children's essential early skills exceptionally well. Every opportunity is taken to build on children's interests and create opportunities in which their speaking and communication skills can be developed. Similarly, early knowledge of number is taught very effectively, although there are not always enough opportunities for children to apply their knowledge of number by recognising and using number patterns.

Intimate knowledge of the learning needs of each child enables teachers and teaching assistants to create a range of individually tailored learning experiences that embrace each area of learning. There is a careful balance of opportunities for children to work and play indoors and outdoors. At appropriate times, children can be independent, make choices, benefit from the support of an adult or work together with other children. Very effective attention is given to the important area of children's physical development. This is seen to great effect when children take part in the Forest Schools activities, which they do with great enthusiasm. Within an excellent range of learning activities, every opportunity is taken to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The provision results in children who are enthusiastic learners, who respond well to challenges and are eager to talk about and share their experiences.

**Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour and safety are outstanding. This view is affirmed by every parent and carer who responded to the inspection questionnaire. The proportion of parents and carers who feel there is little or no bullying of any form is almost as high. Adults are exceptionally successful in helping children to manage their own behaviour. They are consistently vigilant for the slightest indication of inappropriate behaviour or bullying. If any incident should occur, no matter how minor, adults take a consistent approach by asking the child to think about how the other child or children might feel about what has happened. As a result, children are caring and kind towards each other. Given their age, they possess a remarkable insight into the needs of others, invariably showing great sensitivity.

Children say they feel very safe and are very aware of the potential risks they may face. Adults adopt a highly effective range of subtle strategies for children to take responsibility for themselves, especially when they are playing and working outside. This enables children to be thoughtful and show outstanding self-control. That said,

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staff are ever vigilant to ensure that no child is ever placed at risk.

Levels of attendance remain a challenge for the school. Attendance is low, but it is not a legal requirement for children of this age. Even so, the school is constantly striving for ways to work closely with parents and carers to help them recognise the value of their children attending regularly.

## **Leadership and management**

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher is an inspirational leader. The support and guidance she provides for her colleagues and the opportunities they receive for professional development underpin an ethos in which all the staff feel valued and able to do their best. In turn, this ethos is transferred by staff to the children. The children know that everyone cares about them and are all committed to enabling them to succeed to the best of their ability. The promotion of equality of opportunity and elimination of all forms of discrimination is outstanding. No one is complacent and the school is always looking for ways to improve and to embrace and evaluate innovative practice. The governing body is well informed about all aspects of the school's work and ensures that resources are managed very effectively. Teachers work in pairs and in teams to evaluate the quality of teaching and search for ways in which it can become even better. A critical view is also provided by regular external evaluation. Outcomes from evaluations at all levels are drawn together and provide the basis for planning subsequent improvements. The capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding. This is exemplified by the way in which the areas for development identified at the last inspection have been addressed and by the notable improvements evident in all aspects of the school's work.

Children are provided with an excellent range of learning activities. The way in which the outdoors is used to promote all areas of their learning is outstanding. Being part of the Forest Schools Project enables children to achieve high levels of independence and to work together with their classmates; which they do exceptionally well. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. They learn to respect and care for each other. Their understanding of the natural world is exceptional. This is typified by the way in which they care for 'Buffy', the school's chicken, handling her with great care and marvelling at the hatching of her new chicks.

The school works very effectively to win the hearts and minds of parents and carers. Parents and carers know that they are welcome and say they enjoy visiting. Reflecting the views of many, one parent said, 'Earlham Nursery is a fantastic school.' Another commented, 'I could not be happier with this nursery school. My daughter loves coming here.' Every parent and carer who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt the school does all it can to help them support their children's learning. The seamless links between the school and the children's centre also provide families with excellent guidance and support. This is especially true in the case of those children who, because of their circumstances, might at times be

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potentially at risk. Arrangements for safeguarding children meet requirements and do not give rise to any cause for concern.



## The Early Years Foundation Stage delivered in the registered childcare provision

The day nursery meets all registration requirements. It is registered for 50 children, of whom four may be aged under two. Some children start their free entitlement to early education at two years, through the government two year old scheme.

This is an outstanding setting that promotes children’s behaviour and safety exceptionally well. A rich and stimulating learning environment provides children with memorable experiences, ensuring they make outstanding progress from their often low starting points. From the time they join the nursery, children feel safe, valued and special so that, even those who to begin with feel insecure soon settle and are ready to learn. Children demonstrate high levels of enjoyment and quickly become confident learners. They are encouraged to develop independence, through self-registration, taking responsibility for washing their hands, choosing healthy snacks and making appropriate choices about the activities through which they learn.

Adults ensure that all children have a rich diet of developmental vocabulary. The strong focus on children’s social and emotional development means even the youngest children cooperate exceptionally well with adults and with each other. Children are kind to each other and look after one another’s interests. Their behaviour is excellent.

Provision for children is outstanding; the indoor areas are attractive and stimulating. The outdoor area provides a rich learning environment with a wide range of opportunities for purposeful play. Children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. Leadership and management are outstanding. Adults assess children’s progress accurately and respond very effectively to their learning needs.

*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*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
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	1

## 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](http://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.**



21 March 2012

Dear Children

### **Inspection of Earlham Nursery School, Norwich, NR5 8DB**

Thank you for welcoming me and Mr Viner when we visited recently for the inspection of your nursery school and the day nursery. We really appreciated your kindness in taking time to tell us all about your learning and how much you enjoy the activities provided for you. We found that your nursery is outstanding in every way. We know that your parents and carers think so too. Among the many things that impressed are:

- the excellent progress you make, especially in your talking, your physical development and how you learn to take care of yourself
- the ways in which you behave so well and are kind to each other (we were also very impressed with how you care for Buffy)
- the ways in which you work so hard, play well together and behave in such a grown-up way
- the outstanding teaching and enjoyable activities that help you to do so well, especially when you play and work in the excellent outdoor area.

Your headteacher and the other adults are always looking for ways to make your nursery even better. Because of this we are asking them to:

- work as closely as possible with your parents and carers to make sure you can attend as often as possible
- help you to gain an even better understanding of numbers and the patterns that numbers make.

All the very best and thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Godfrey Bancroft  
Lead inspector

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