

Walbrook Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112475
Local Authority	Derby
Inspection number	357110
Inspection dates	16–17 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ranjodh Sund
Headteacher	Karen Clark
Date of previous school inspection	27 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors, who observed 14 parts of lessons, including a visit to the Forest School, led by three teachers and four support staff. Meetings were held with staff and governors, and discussions were held with parents and carers. Inspectors observed the nursery's work, and looked at policies, evidence of internal monitoring, academic performance data and teachers' planning. Safeguarding documents were scrutinised. The inspectors analysed 56 parental questionnaires and 10 questionnaires from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The achievement of all groups of children, but particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, children learning English as an additional language, and boys.
- How well the governing body evaluates the work of the nursery.
- The impact of the federation with Pear Tree Infant School on children's learning.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized nursery. Children attend either morning or afternoon sessions. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals is high. There are 11 languages spoken at the nursery. A high proportion - over 65% - of the children are at the very early stages of learning English as an additional language, and 75% are of Pakistani heritage. An above average proportion have special educational needs and/or disabilities relating to speech and language difficulties, or social and emotional difficulties. The nursery is recognised as a Health Promoting School and has recently received the Leading Parent Partnership Award for its outstanding work with parents and carers. The nursery offers a 'stay and play' facility for parents and carers of children up to three years of age. In January 2010, the nursery federated with Pear Tree Infant School.

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

The nursery continues to provide an excellent quality of education. Its motto of 'learning together' and its aim of offering 'a warm, caring, safe and stimulating environment in which all children achieve their maximum potential' underpin all aspects of provision. Children thrive because they are treated as individuals and their needs are known very well to staff.

Exemplary teaching and a very well-planned curriculum ensure that all groups of children make exceptional progress in all areas of learning, but especially in speaking and listening, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. Progress in early reading and writing skills is never less than good but there are some missed opportunities in play to develop these skills. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive very good quality, targeted support. Those who speak English as an additional language make very fast gains in learning due to the high emphasis placed on speaking and listening. The nursery has successfully closed the gap in achievement between boys and girls. Meticulous planning of activities is built upon children's interest levels. The outstanding curriculum, both indoors and outdoors and especially in the 'Forest School', has a marked impact on children's speech and language development and compensates for the lack of play areas in the community. Standards are improving year on year.

The impact of the federation is most noticeable in excellent transition procedures. Infant school staff have opportunities to work with children who will attend the reception classes. Teaching and learning have improved due to joint planning, moderation of children's work and increased dialogue between subject leaders. The inspirational leadership of the headteacher ensures that the two schools work very closely together and share best practice.

Parents and carers are delighted with the nursery. 'I would travel miles to bring my children here. We really appreciate the regular parenting classes, they have helped us become better parents,' said one. The nursery ensures that parents and carers are true partners in learning. No child is left behind. The staff are passionate about cohesion within the local community. 'It starts in the nursery, if we can get the children and parents and carers to respect one another, we stand a chance of creating harmonious communities,' said the headteacher.

Behaviour is exemplary and children have excellent attitudes to learning. They concentrate really well on their activities such as mark-making in clay in the forest, and demonstrate great pride in sharing their work with one another. The nursery provides a breakfast for all morning children and lunch for the afternoon children. Children at breakfast show very good manners. They take turns and share with one another excitedly, talking about what they will play with when nursery commences. Teaching is exemplary. Staff know children's

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interest levels and create a highly magical learning environment based around very thorough planning.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and every day presents exciting learning opportunities where their uniqueness is valued. The way children are cared for is exceptional. Safety is paramount and excellent systems ensure children learn in a safe learning environment.

Excellent, honest self-evaluation identifies clear strengths and areas for development, although the success criteria identified in the school development plan are not fully measurable and this prevents the very dedicated governing body from fully evaluating the cost effectiveness of its spending decisions. Even so, this is a nursery that could never be described as standing still. It is continuously looking to see how its provision can be improved or extended to benefit both children and the community, and has an excellent capacity to continue to do so.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure every opportunity is taken, both indoors and outdoors, to develop early reading and writing skills.
 - Ensure that the school development plan has measurable success criteria by which the governing body can further evaluate the cost effectiveness of their spending decisions.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children**1**

From a very low baseline on entry, children's excellent progress to attain the expectations for their age by the time they leave reflects good overall achievement. All groups of children typically made outstanding progress in the lessons seen. When the staff identified boys' outcomes in writing as a weaker area, they immediately developed activities outdoors such as a building site, visits to the Forest School and mark-making with twigs and a variety of utensils to help them overcome their difficulties. When children who speak English as an additional language have acquired key words, they soon attempt to put them into sentences which are expertly upgraded by the staff. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are included in all aspects of nursery life and their targets are consistently referred to in daily routines. Children are taught how to persevere in their work and to take risks. In the Forest School they were able to explore space by wandering away from their teacher, ever mindful of chanting 'One, two, three where are you?' so that they did not get lost. Relationships between children and adults are exemplary. A sense of humour is always apparent. When asked by a teacher why some fruit for the fruit salad was cut up into bigger pieces, the child replied 'It's for the children who have bigger mouths!' While carefully cutting the fruit, they talk about the importance of five a day. Children have excellent knowledge of healthy eating and keeping safe. They ride their bikes very carefully and reiterate safe crossing of roads in their play. Behaviour is exemplary because learning is such fun. Children have many opportunities to develop their basic skills, although staff do not always ensure that they form their letters correctly or make the most of opportunities to teach early literacy skills through play.

Children's contribution to the local community is outstanding. They speak very knowledgeably about festivals that their friends celebrate and care passionately about

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their nursery, ensuring that all resources are treated carefully. When looking for 'letter fairies' in the garden, they take great care not to rip them off the trees.

Attendance is satisfactory and improving. The nursery has a very strict policy on extended holidays, which have been diminishing as parents and carers are worried they may lose their child's place at the nursery. The extent to which children develop skills for their future economic well-being is good, particularly in problem solving and thinking 'outside the box'.

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	2
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	2
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Children's attendance ¹	3
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Staff are very knowledgeable and stop at nothing to offer children the very best start in life. Assessment is very thorough and very detailed records are kept of children's learning. These are regularly shared with parents and carers. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive excellent help from speech and language therapists, paediatricians and educational psychologists. Records show excellent progress made towards their targets. In an outstanding lesson aimed at developing pre-writing skills, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities worked exceptionally well at making movements that would later be transferred into writing patterns. This was further reinforced through very good opportunities to use information and communication

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technology when they made letters on the interactive whiteboard, using a cursor with great confidence.

Staff are experts at creating a rich and very safe environment in which children thrive. The newly built outside facilities are excellent with a mixture of surfaces, resources and activities supporting adult-led and child-initiated play and learning. Children eagerly dig, plant and water vegetables and flowers. A strong feature of the very well planned curriculum is the wide range of trips and visits to enhance learning. A forthcoming trip to Blackpool is to be used as a stimulus for children learning English as an additional language to read stories and play with sand castles, in order to reinforce their knowledge of newly acquired vocabulary of the seaside.

A love of the natural world is developed throughout the nursery, and teachers ensure that all children have access to activities that develop their linguistic experiences. For example, in an excellent lesson on sounding out letters, the teacher recreated the experience of finding 'sound fairies' in the school garden. Children squealed with delight every time they found one. They continued to practise the letter sound until they got it right. This has an excellent impact on their emerging skills of linking letters to sounds.

Staff provide excellent care, guidance and support and this is backed up by parents' and carers' views. Many feel that the nursery supports them very well. External agencies are used very well to support children with specific needs and staff take on board all recommendations from speech therapists and educational psychologists. The breakfast club is very well attended and promotes the importance of healthy eating.

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 effectiveness of this nursery is directly related to the outstanding leadership provided by the headteacher, who is pivotal in uniting the various nationalities and cultures. 'Reaching for the stars' is apparent in all aspects of the nursery's provision. The headteacher's watchful presence over tensions in the community is greatly appreciated by the parents and carers. 'She knows a lot of what goes on around here and makes sure that we all feel safe.' The nursery has excellent links with the local police, community officers and places of worship, and is working on developing global links, an issue identified in the school development plan. Safeguarding arrangements are outstanding because all aspect of the care, safety, welfare and protection of children are of the highest quality. Risk assessments are particularly thorough.

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All staff carry out their duties very effectively and work enthusiastically at ensuring that planning is 'top notch' and that the learning environment is exceptionally stimulating for the children. Teaching and learning are consistently improving because of the strong links with the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators in the infant school, the excellent monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher, and staff access to the work of an advanced skills teacher who models excellent practice.

The governing body has provided a strong steer during the time of federation, and has handled change management exceptionally well. It is very well informed about most aspects of nursery life, but the success criteria on the school development plan are not specific enough for it to monitor outcomes easily. All staff are clear about their roles and evaluate every aspect of work thoroughly. Distributed leadership among the staff has resulted in a highly reliable team of professionals who see the nursery as the heart of the community. They commit themselves to giving of their best to both children and families. The nursery is a fully cohesive community for all who work and learn in it. Staff morale is high because of the trust placed in them by the headteacher, governing body and parents and carers. The focus on each individual child and the help offered to parents and carers ensure excellent equality of opportunity.

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	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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

A high proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires, and they were generally very positive. They think that behaviour is excellent and that their children are very well prepared for reception classes. They are very impressed with all that the nursery does to help them become true partners in learning. A very small minority of parents and carers think that their children are not as well as prepared as they could be for infant school.

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Inspectors judged that there were a few missed opportunities during the nursery day to place even more emphasis on early reading and writing skills, but overall children are prepared well for later life.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Walbrook Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 80 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	68	18	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	73	15	27	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	40	71	16	29	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	61	21	38	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	71	15	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	61	22	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	59	22	39	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)	23	41	27	48	2	4	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	54	25	45	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	61	18	32	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	59	18	32	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	34	61	20	36	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	73	14	25	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.

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.



20 June 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Walbrook Nursery School, Derby, DE23 8QJ

Thank you for making us feel so welcome in your wonderful school, and telling us all about it. The nursery is outstanding, and these are the things we liked best.

You enjoy learning so much, especially in the Forest School.

Your nursery is exceptionally well led and managed by your headteacher, and she has worked very hard with the staff to ensure that your parents and carers help you to learn at home.

You have excellent attitudes to learning and you behave very well.

You have very good knowledge of keeping safe, especially in the Forest School.

You work and play exceptionally well particularly outdoors. We really liked your new outdoor garden and your 'building site'.

You make excellent progress in lessons because your teachers have excellent teaching skills.

You work very hard at making your muscles strong so you become good writers - well done!

You know so many things about healthy eating and I thought that your fruit salad was delicious.

We have asked the grown-ups in charge of your nursery to make it even better by writing more information on their school development plan, so that your governors can see how well you are doing. We have also asked the teachers to give you even more opportunities to read and form your letters correctly. You can help by asking them how to spell any words you find difficult, and asking them for more help in your writing.

Thank you for sprinkling me with 'fairy dust' - I will try to work as hard as you do.

Yours sincerely

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

Lead inspector

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