

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HEDON NURSERY SCHOOL**

HEDON

HULL

LEA area: East Riding of Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 131416

Headteacher: Mrs J Hadfield (Acting)

Reporting inspector: Mike Warman  
1516

Dates of inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> –12<sup>th</sup> March 2002

Inspection number: 199653

Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 5 Years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Market Hill Hedon Hull East Riding of Yorkshire
Postcode:	HU12 8JB
Telephone number:	01482 891396
Fax number:	01482 891396
Appropriate authority:	East Riding of Yorkshire LEA
Name of chair of governors:	Mr T Goldspink
Date of previous inspection:	11 <sup>th</sup> May 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Hedon Nursery serves the town of Hedon not far from Hull. There are 120 children on roll between the ages of 3 and 5 years, although most children leave when they are four years old. All the children attend part-time. The children come from the town of Hedon and surrounding villages. They have a range of social backgrounds. Overall the attainment of children on entry to the nursery is average. However, some children enter the nursery with assessments that are below average and a small number have advanced skills. At present, there are three children identified as having special educational needs and one has a statement. No children speak English as an additional language. The nursery does not offer meals at lunchtime and so it is not known how many children are eligible for free school meals. The substantive headteacher is presently on long term absence due to illness. The children are taught by three teachers, one of whom is the acting headteacher and one is part-time. There are five nursery nurses, two of whom are part-time.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Hedon Nursery is a very good school which is highly valued by the parents of the children who attend. The school is very well led and managed. All staff demonstrate a clear commitment to the school and the children. The quality of teaching is very good and this helps to foster the very good attitudes shown by the children. Children make very good progress and achieve high standards.

#### **What the school does well**

- Children achieve high standards in all areas of learning but especially in communication, language and literacy, in mathematics and in their personal, social and emotional development.
- The quality of teaching is very good and this enables children to make very good progress.
- The school is very well led and managed and all staff show a clear commitment to the children and work very effectively as a team.
- Children show very good attitudes to their learning, they are confident, independent and they behave very well.
- Parents have a very positive view of the school.

#### **What could be improved**

- The information provided for parents about how their children are getting on is insufficient for a significant number of them.
- The records of children's achievements do not link closely enough to the early learning goals and the stepping stones towards them.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in May 1998 when it was judged to be a good school. Since then it has continued to move forward and has made good improvement. The standards children achieve are now better and teaching and learning has also improved. Only two key issues were identified by the inspection relating to the need to rationalise the assessment procedures and the improvement of outdoor play. There has been a review of the school's assessment procedures which are now good. They are effectively used by all staff to identify how well children are doing and the next stages in their learning. The planning of outdoor play is now more detailed, children have more adult involvement and consequently make very good progress in their physical development. The issue about the narrow passageway has been addressed by the erection of a fence and gate. The whole of the outside area is now safe for the children and easily supervised by staff.

## STANDARDS

Children achieve high standards in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

Overall, the children make very good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning and most are on course to attain the expected standards by the time they leave the school. The progress made in children's personal, social and emotional development is recognised by the parents as a major strength of the school. Children demonstrate a high level of independence when choosing activities and discussing their work. Children achieve very well in communication, language and literacy. They listen well to the staff and to each other, both in story times, at the start of sessions and when they talk in their groups. They show that they are learning good reading habits through planned opportunities to look at books. Many demonstrate a good knowledge of how books work. They show an awareness of writing as they make good attempts to write their names, and a significant number produce recognisable letters. Very good role-play opportunities enable children to make up their own stories and become familiar with numbers and their use in the real world, for example, when they buy and pay for plants in the garden centre. Children's standards in mathematics are high. Many count to 10 accurately and can identify one more or one less. They recognise and name simple shapes and understand mathematical language such as "more and less" and "big and small".

The children are very curious about the world around them. For example, they look very carefully at the flowers and onion bulbs and talk about what they see. They use computers for a range of learning activities and show confidence in using a touch screen and a mouse. Children's physical development is encouraged very well through both indoor and outdoor activities. They show a growing control of the equipment and a developing awareness of space and the movements of others. Children's creative skills are developing very well. They express themselves well through a range of media. Most know the names of the main colours and use their imagination well when painting and creating collages of different coloured materials.

Children with special educational needs make good progress and are well supported. They take a full part in all activities. Children of all abilities achieve very well and make very good gains in their learning.

## CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Children enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. They delight in opportunities to encounter new experiences and take part in activities with enthusiasm.
Behaviour	Very good. Children respond very well to the expectations of the school and know how to behave in the different situations.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Children settle quickly and work well independently. Relationships throughout the school are very good.
Attendance	Very good. Children are very keen to attend, they arrive on time and sessions get off to a prompt start.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of children:</b>	
Quality of teaching	Very Good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

Teaching is very good overall especially in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematics. All the teaching seen during the inspection was at least good and a large proportion was very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. A particularly strong feature of the teaching is the very good teamwork and the commitment of all staff to help the children do their very best. This is successful. Staff know the children well and their individual needs, which enables them to provide challenging activities that extend and enrich their learning. Activities are very carefully prepared using the very good resources available. Staff have a good knowledge of what they teach and are very clear about the expected outcomes of activities. This enables them to work with the children very effectively and support their learning successfully. Staff have high expectations and the children respond well to these in both their learning and behaviour. The level of responsibility that the children take for their own learning is very good.

Children with special educational needs are very effectively supported and consequently achieve well.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school provides a very wide range of interesting and exciting activities that clearly promote the early learning goals.
Provision for children with special educational needs	Good. Children's specific needs are well identified and they are very effectively supported, resulting in good progress being made.
Provision for children's personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. All aspects of children's personal development are very successfully promoted by all staff. Children's moral and social development are particularly well supported. In many activities children show a sense of wonder and excitement.
How well the school cares for its children	Very good. The school provides a safe and secure environment in which all children thrive. Assessment arrangements are good, although the school's records of children's achievements do not link closely enough to the early learning goals and the stepping stones towards them.

The curriculum includes a very good balance between activities that are chosen by the children and those that are directed by adults. Priority is given to personal, social and emotional development, and to literacy and numeracy skills, which are reinforced continuously. All children, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to the curriculum.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher and key staff lead the school very well and provide a very clear direction for it to move forward. This results in the very good teaching and learning seen and the children achieving high standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors have a good understanding of the work of the school and support it very well. The school does not have a delegated budget but governors carry out their limited responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has developed effective self-evaluation systems that support the drive to improve the overall quality of the provision.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. All funds and specific grants are used well to support children's learning. Resources have been very wisely chosen and they are used to maximum effect in all six areas of learning.

The very good leadership and management are characterised by the continual drive for improvements in the overall provision and the standards children attain. Within their limited budgetary control, the governors do their best to ensure best value in all aspects of the school's work.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour in school is good.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable approaching the school.</li> <li>• The school expects their child to work hard.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school is helping their child to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of information about how their children are getting on.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the parents very positive views about the school. The school has rightly identified the need to provide parents with more information about how their children are getting on and plans to start holding termly parents' evenings beginning in the Summer term.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**Children achieve high standards in all areas of learning but especially in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and their personal, social and emotional development.**

1. The majority of children enter the school with broadly average communication, mathematical, social, creative and physical skills. A few children have special educational needs and a further small number have advanced skills and levels of maturity for their ages. The very good range of activities, very good teaching and the quality of support for the children all help them to make very good progress so that they achieve high standards. They are on course to achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning, by the time they leave the school.

2. The staff create a strong ethos that gives children the security and confidence to explore and take part in activities. Children build friendships and strong relationships with the adults and these help their learning to progress well. For example, a significant amount of one-to-one dialogue takes place between adults and children. Staff make their expectations clear and reinforce these in a firm but very supportive manner. On the rare occasions when children show signs of uncertainty or distress, staff quickly give them the necessary support and care and this soon has them back into the swing of the activities.

3. Standards in children's personal, social and emotional development are very good and children are on course to achieve the expected levels by the time they leave the school. They effectively learn to work and play with each other positively through the very good role-play activities set up for them. For example, there was much activity in the garden centre where children were buying and selling plants and in the home corner where they were preparing a pasta meal for their friends. They show a high level of interest in what they do and concentrate for long periods of time on the exciting range of activities provided.

4. A high emphasis is placed on speaking and listening skills throughout all activities. Children become confident in their use of speech. They answer questions well and frequently talk about their likes and dislikes for example, when they were tasting different types of fruit or smelling onions. Throughout the day, children can be seen in activity related conversations at a level that is very good for their age. One group had a long conversation on the four telephones that were set out on the office table and made notes on the pads provided. Very good opportunities are created for children to develop their emerging writing skills through writing their names and simple captions on their work. A significant number produce recognisable letter shapes and many write their names independently. Story times are very good vehicles for introducing children to books, stories and nursery rhymes and these happen regularly in small groups. Stories are very well told conveying the excitement of waiting to see what will happen next. Children are taught how to use the title pages and pictures in the book to anticipate what the story will be about.

5. Staff are very conscious of the need to draw mathematical language and understanding from as many activities as possible. The end result is that children make very good progress and the standards they attain are high. By the time they leave the school, most children are familiar with numbers larger than ten and staff expect children to be confident in counting objects or children when for example the register is being taken or when a group is lining up to go to another activity. Requests like "How many children are there?" or "Lets count how many we've got" can frequently be heard. Many children can plant the correct number of beans in a pot when given a pattern to count or the numeral as a guide. Staff use mathematical language well, for example, "How much bigger is ten than

nine?" or "Which onion is the biggest?" Many children can correctly identify simple two-dimensional shapes such as circles, and squares and sort them successfully by shape, size and colour. They develop a good understanding of the concepts of volume and capacity through practical activities using water and sand.

**The quality of teaching is very good and this enables children to make very good progress.**

6. The quality of teaching is very good and has improved since the last inspection. There is an experienced team of teachers, nursery nurses and support staff who work extremely well together. A major strength is the quality of the relationships built up with children. Routines are very clear. This gives the children confidence and security, and encourages them to explore and take part in the full range of activities available to them. The planning is very detailed and completed by all staff together. This is a strength as it ensures that when different staff work on the same activity with different groups there is consistency of approach. This was seen during the inspection when staff rotated the activities in the 'skills sessions' each day and the different groups had a consistent approach. Staff have a very good knowledge of the individual children and their needs. This is demonstrated very well by the dialogue between children and staff on an individual basis and the way this extends learning in an effective way. Staff's questioning skills are very good and are effectively and appropriately targeted at children to extend their understanding. The staff have high expectations of all children and this helps ensure that they make very good progress. Very good use is made of opportunities for incidental learning as they arise. For example, children count the chimes of the church clock during a physical activity session outside, or anticipate how many it will be when it begins to chime, by looking at the clock face. It is opportunities like these that ensure that children are continually learning and developing and consolidating their skills.

7. Exciting and effective learning is created through a range of creative and role-play areas as well as quieter areas for reading, early writing or counting activities. The excitement of learning is emphasised by staff using their imagination very well to provide a wide range of activities for the children. For example, the superb sensory garden that all children walked through with their parents as they arrived prompted a great deal of excited talk and emotions. To link with the current topic the sand tray has been filled with compost and children use garden tools, flower pots and artificial flowers in imaginative ways. The good use of displays of children's work, as well as displays to encourage reading and other skills, helps to create a bright and rich learning environment. Resources are very well prepared and appropriate, and are used very effectively to help children learn. Very good use is made of learning opportunities in the locality. For example children visit local churches, shops and the library on a regular basis.

8. There is very good teamwork and communication between members of staff about individual children's progress in activities. The planning of activities, including the person to take responsibility for each activity each day, is very clear and all staff have a very good understanding of their roles. This ensures that activities run very smoothly and all children gain maximum benefit from them.

**The school is very well led and managed and all staff show a clear commitment to the children and work very effectively as a team.**

9. The substantive headteacher is on long term absence due to illness and an acting headteacher, who has worked in the school since it opened, has assumed the responsibility. The school is very well organised with very clear structures and has procedures that are well established. There is an effective system for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching. All these systems have been successfully continued during the headteacher's

absence. In addition, good work has been started to show how effective the provision is by using the school's assessments on entry and when children leave, to measure progress. This evidence shows that children make very good progress during the three or four terms they are in school. For the last two terms the school has used the Primary Indicator Project (PIPS) scores for the children when they first enter primary school. This information for the latest group to leave shows that the school's assessments of progress are accurate. It is also used well to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's curriculum.

10. The curriculum is very well planned and the effective management of the curriculum, accommodation and resources provides children with a very good range and variety of experiences. All staff work very well together as a very effective team and their contributions are highly valued by the acting headteacher. Routines are very well established and clear to the children, resulting in them being very secure and developing independent learning skills very well.

11. The shared purpose among all staff is evident. The school has a relaxed but very purposeful ethos and this is reflected in the attitudes of the children as they take part in activities with quiet enjoyment and confidence. The school is successful in meeting its aims. This very good ethos is clearly seen in all aspects of the school's work and reflected by the enthusiasm of the children and the staff. The management and ethos of the school are supported very well by the efficient and friendly manner in which the school secretary carries out her responsibilities.

12. Although the governing body has more limited powers than those in schools with fully delegated budgets, it is well informed and exercises effective critical oversight of the school's activities. It supports the school very well and its members show a good knowledge of what goes on. The governing body works closely with the Local Education Authority to secure resources or influence decisions when, for example, reductions in staffing are being considered. Governors are involved in the school's development planning which has given them a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement. They also discuss and approve all the school's policies and ensure they are effective, for example, the implementation of special educational needs procedures.

13. The acting headteacher and staff work closely with other schools and the wider community in order to enrich the learning opportunities available to the children, and prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

14. Although the school does not have a delegated budget, spending decisions are taken on the basis of the priorities identified within its development plan. In addition, the school raises a significant amount of money through its voluntary contributions that are well used to supplement the overall provision. The school seeks to achieve the best value that it can within its limited powers. A recent LEA audit of the school's financial procedures showed that they were good and gave no significant recommendations.

**Children show very good attitudes to their learning, are confident, independent and they behave very well.**

15. The school places great importance on developing positive attitudes and behaviour amongst the children within an environment that helps them to grow as individuals. The way in which the whole staff work together to achieve these objectives is a strength. The mutual respect that the children show for one another is very good. It is usual for children to support each other, whether one has been hurt in some way or a younger child needs help from an older one. All children share well with each other and wait their turn. For example, they wait patiently to be served with their snack or to have a turn on the bikes outside.

16. The children behave very well when working at different activities and their behaviour when moving between activities, and the inside and the outside of the building is very good. The way the children respond to the “magic bell” is outstanding. The school organisation is specifically geared to help children become confident and independent in their learning. From the very beginning of each session when children go into their groups to talk about what they have done at home and choose what activities they want to start with, they are well supported. For example, children are helped to choose activities by the careful explanation from staff of what is available. This results in children knowing exactly what they have chosen to do and consequently they stay at that activity for a good period of time. Another very good feature of the organisation in this respect the way in which the sessions are divided into activity and group sessions. The lengths of time involved means that children keep returning to the base group where they are secure. Another very good strategy to support children in choosing activities and gaining independence skills is the way only the boxes with their label showing are available to be used at different times. Children know this well and consequently feel confident in making their choices.

17. Children are eager to come into school and begin working, and pace is well maintained. They take considerable responsibility for their own learning and, as a result, staff can concentrate on helping individual children or extending the learning of others rather than on management matters. By the time they leave, the children have been very well prepared, both in terms of the standards achieved and of their social, behavioural and personal development, to achieve success in their next school. Relationships between all members of the school community are very good.

### **Parents have a very positive view of the school.**

18. Relationships with parents are a strength of the school. The questionnaires returned by the parents, the meeting with parents and discussions with parents during the inspection, all confirmed that parents hold the school in high esteem. The partnership that exists between parents and school is strong. The information made available to parents about the curriculum and activities is good through the regular newsletters and the informative notice boards. There are also very many well produced signs that indicate the purpose of many activities and photographs are used well. Parents indicate that they feel confident and at ease when they come into the school. Opportunities for them to discuss concerns, or simply to pass on information, are made available at the start and end of each session. Parents are encouraged to help their children at home so that learning becomes a shared activity. For example, the present homework is for parents and children to work together to make a miniature garden. These are now being brought into school and there are already a very good number on display. Parents respond well to these homework activities as they see them as important ways of helping their children learn.

### **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

#### **The quality of information provided for parents about how their children are getting on.**

19. Although parents have a very high opinion of the school and what it does, there was one issue that was raised by a significant number of parents on the questionnaire. These parents recognised that staff made themselves available and were prepared to talk about how children were getting on at the beginnings and ends of sessions, and obviously know children very well. However, there is no formal arrangement for this information to be passed on. Some parents mentioned the point that, for those parents who did not come into daily contact with the school, the information they received was limited. The school builds a portfolio of children’s work for those leaving to take to their new school. Parents see this but only at the end of their child’s time in school. The school recognises the need to improve the

information they provide to all parents about how their children are getting on. To this end it plans to start holding termly parents' evenings beginning in the Summer term. As well as parents having the opportunity to talk to staff about their child's progress at the first meeting the school also plans to ask parents how this aspect of its work can be improved.

**The records of children's achievements so that they link more closely to the early learning goals and the stepping stones towards them.**

20. The school has improved its assessment and recording systems as was recommended at the last inspection. The ways the school assesses children's achievements are now an integral part of all the planned activities and all staff are involved. The school records these achievements against levels linked to each of the areas of learning. Although these are very effective for showing the progress children are making they have not been revised to take account of the early learning goals and the stepping stones towards them. This would make the records more effective and linked more closely to the way the school plans. The school has recognised this and is in the process of revising its records in line with the early learning goals and the stepping stones.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

21. In order to strengthen further the very good quality of education offered to children, the headteacher, staff, LEA and governors should:

1. Improve the ways in which parents get to know how their children are getting on in school by:
  - carrying out the planned parents' meetings;
  - taking account of any ideas that come from parents to improve this aspect of it's work.
  
2. Review the present system for recording children's achievements so that it is more closely linked to the early learning goals and the stepping stones which lead towards them.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of sessions observed	12
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	8

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	4	0	0	0	0
Percentage	0	66	33	0	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of sessions observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each session represents more than eight percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	60
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	Nil

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	Nil
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	Nil

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	N/A

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	N/A

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and support staff

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24:1

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	100

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10:1
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

## Financial information

Financial year	2000 – 2001
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	£
Total income	160,112
Total expenditure	156,934
Expenditure per pupil	2615
Balance brought forward from previous year	3070
Balance carried forward to next year	6248

## Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	Nil
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	Nil

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	Nil
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	Nil
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	Nil

FTE means full-time equivalent.

**Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	120
Number of questionnaires returned	107

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	85	15	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	83	16	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	80	18	1	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	66	28	3	1	2
The teaching is good.	82	15	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	24	12	6	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	87	12	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	33	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	57	35	5	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	84	13	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	73	27	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	73	15	4	3	5