



The Arnold Centre

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106826
LEA Rotherham
Inspection number 277638
Inspection dates 10 May 2006 to 11 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Robert Robinson CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Goldsmith Road
School category	Community		Rotherham
Age range of pupils	3 to 5		South Yorkshire S65 2LY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01709 828983
Number on roll	130	Fax number	01709 828983
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Jayne Fitzgerald
Date of previous inspection	18 January 2000	Headteacher	Mrs H Powell

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This nursery is part of The Arnold Centre, which provides education and care for children from birth to five years. It gained Early Excellence status in 2002 and was recognised as a Children's Centre in March 2006.

The nursery serves a socially and economically deprived area. On entry, children's standards are well below average, particularly in language and communication. Most children come from white British backgrounds, with an increasing proportion of children of Asian backgrounds. A few children are asylum seekers. A high proportion of children have identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities including eight children with particular learning difficulties and/or disabilities from within the local authority.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

'From the moment you enter the door you know that the centre is the right place for your child.'

'I cannot fault the centre. It is brilliant and offers fantastic facilities for working parents.'

These parental comments are justified because the overall effectiveness of this nursery is outstanding. Its view that it is good is far too modest. Partnership with other areas of provision at the children's centre benefits children's learning extremely well. The headteacher and deputy headteacher of the centre lead and manage the Nursery exceptionally well. They are assisted extremely well by other middle managers and all other members of staff. Governance is good. Children make very rapid progress and, by the time they move to their next school, most are working close to the level expected of their age. This is because of high quality teaching, very effective support for learning, an extremely well planned curriculum and excellent monitoring of children's progress. Care, guidance and support and children's personal development are outstanding. The children enjoy coming to the Nursery and their behaviour is exemplary. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. The centre does not rest on its laurels and rigorously seeks ways to improve provision. It has accurately identified the need to continue striving to improve standards further; for example, by considering if interactive whiteboards would benefit teaching and learning. The centre is extremely well placed to continue to improve even further and provides outstanding value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make available interactive whiteboards to further improve teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding. From a well below average starting point, children make very rapid progress because of high quality provision. By the time they leave, most are close to the standards expected of their age in all areas of learning. Strengths in children's attainment are in personal, social and emotional development. They make very good progress in basic skills in communication, language and literacy.

Excellent support is given to those children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to help them make similarly outstanding progress to others. Children who are learning English as an additional language make very rapid progress because their needs are catered for extremely well by staff and by the bi-lingual family worker. As a result, they quickly learn to speak and understand English. Higher attaining children are well challenged, resulting in them achieving very well and reaching above average standards.

The nursery provides a very successful and inclusive learning environment for all children. It prepares them extremely well for the next stage of education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. The centre's very effective induction procedures, including visits to families, help children to settle very quickly into school life. Relationships between staff and children are excellent. At the start of sessions children enter their classrooms confidently and they quickly become engrossed in the wide range of interesting activities. Children are highly motivated and have excellent attitudes to learning. Because of this, they make outstanding progress in their personal, social and emotional development. This supports their future attitude to learning very well. Most children attend well, though a few families do not ensure that their children attend regularly despite the nursery's best efforts. As a result, these children do not benefit fully from the excellent education provided. Children are very supportive of one another, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and this is demonstrated in their excellent behaviour. Children enjoy finding out about the traditions of different cultures. They have made very good progress in the safe use of equipment and healthy lifestyles. For example, they use cutlery very well and are beginning to understand the benefits of healthy food at snack times and lunch.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding and leads to children making very rapid progress. All staff work extremely well together and this is of great benefit to children's learning. Because all staff have high levels of skills, the quality of teaching is consistently of a high standard. The planning of lessons is matched very well to children's needs. The organisation of teaching and learning is exemplary, resulting in exciting learning both indoors and outdoors.

Lessons move at a brisk pace and resources are used exceptionally well to stimulate children's learning. Staff have very high expectations of children's work and behaviour, resulting in children working productively throughout the day. They respond very well to challenges set by the teaching. Staff work hard and knowledgably with children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English, and push on their learning at a fast pace. Staff know the children extremely well and make thorough assessments of their individual progress in lessons. This information is used very effectively to plan future learning and to identify whether additional help for individuals is needed, such as in the nurture and the social groups.

These groups provide exceptional opportunities for small groups of children with social and emotional difficulties to work with staff to assist them to gain confidence.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding because it meets all children's needs in full. It is extremely well planned and thought out. The planning of activities in the stimulating outdoor area is exemplary and complements the learning opportunities indoors. Children access a wide range of exciting activities that allows them to follow their own interests. Excellent accommodation and resources are used extremely well, to motivate and interest children. Generous staffing levels mean that children have plenty of opportunities to work alongside adults and this benefits the development of their basic skills in all areas of learning. There are no interactive whiteboards at the centre to provide opportunities to enhance the quality of teaching and learning further.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified quickly and strategies are put in place to enable them to make the best possible progress. Special events and visitors, such as a cultural week involving parents representing the different ethnic groups in the school, enrich learning opportunities. Regular visits around the local areas enliven and add purpose to learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support given to children are outstanding. Robust child protection procedures are in place. Thorough risk assessments ensure that health and safety matters are very well organised. Those children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported by carefully thought out individual education plans which are shared with parents. Support for other groups of children, such as those learning English as an additional language, vulnerable children and asylum seekers, is equally effective. Very effective systems are in place to track academic and personal development of all groups of children.

Lunchtimes are supervised exceptionally well and children eat the healthy meal options as well as developing good social skills and eating habits. Parents are full of praise for the way the school cares for their children. For example, one commented, 'my child's medical needs have always been dealt with in a considerate and caring manner'.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership and management of the nursery are outstanding. The centre's vision statement, 'to provide the highest quality care and education for the very young and support for families', is met exceptionally well. The headteacher leads and manages the nursery extremely well and is highly regarded by children, governors, parents and staff. She is assisted extremely well by the deputy headteacher and managers of the

administration, day-care, family support, inclusion and premises teams. The organisation of the nursery is highly effective. All staff work very well together and have an exceptional passion to provide the best possible education for the children. Team work is outstanding and job satisfaction is high.

Professional development of all staff is a major strength. A high proportion of staff have developed their expertise and taken on greater responsibilities because of the training opportunities they have had. Some staff have visited schools abroad and others are accessing further education at a local university. This has benefited children's learning immensely because it has led to high levels of staff expertise to match the high level of their commitment. The centre is acknowledged within the local authority for its excellent provision. Workshops are held for other private and local authority settings so that the outstanding practice can be disseminated.

Governance is good. Governors take their roles and responsibilities very seriously and work extremely well with the staff. They are highly committed to extending their roles. Governors are determined to meet the needs of families in the local community as well as those of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who attend the centre from further afield. A governor encapsulated the feelings of others by stating, 'I am proud to be a governor of The Arnold Centre'.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming me to your nursery. You all go to an excellent nursery and I enjoyed very much the two days I spent with you.

What I particularly liked about your nursery.

- The head and deputy head lead and manage the nursery extremely well.
- You are taught very well and make extremely good progress in your learning.
- You behave extremely well and work hard in lessons and all of you get on so well together.
- The staff look after you exceptionally well.
- You really enjoy school.
- Your parents and carers are very pleased that you come to this nursery.

What I have asked your school to do now.

- To consider if a white board linked to a computer will help improve your learning.

I appreciated talking to you about your work and watching you learn, I wish you well for the future.