



Ripley Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112478
LEA DERBYSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 278936
Inspection dates 19 June 2006 to 20 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Alison Cogher AI

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Sandham Lane
School category	Maintained		DE5 3HE
Age range of pupils	3 to 4		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01773 745014
Number on roll	146	Fax number	
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Cllr.Geoff Carlile
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs. Pat Astill

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3 to 4	19 June 2006 - 20 June 2006	278936

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a large nursery school which serves Ripley and its surrounding area. Almost all children are of White British descent and come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. The school has Enhanced Resource Status to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school works very closely with a number of external agencies to support children and the community by providing for example, adult education and health visitor sessions. The school achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2005. Full day care and out-of-school care are available on the school site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Ripley Nursery is an extremely good school that provides outstanding value for money. Parents hold the school in high regard and are very happy with all that it does for their children. Children delight in coming to school and are disappointed when they are unable to attend. In their pursuit of excellence staff are very self critical and rigorously evaluate the quality of all aspects of the school's provision. Children enter the school with skills that are generally well below, or low, compared to those expected for their age. Outstanding teaching ensures that children make rapid progress and achieve the very challenging targets they are set. Assessment procedures are exceptionally good. Minor improvements would enable staff to check with greater ease the progress being made by the lowest attaining children towards, and into, the early stages of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Children are nurtured as individuals and the care and support they receive are of a very high quality. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good and the school is very well placed to continue to improve in the future. All staff are very enthusiastic, fully committed to school improvement and work extremely effectively as a team to provide the very best start for children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Refine the procedures for recording the progress made by children working below, and within, the early stages of the Foundation Stage curriculum to provide a continuous assessment recording system.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children start in the nursery with standards overall that are well below those expected for their age in all six areas of learning. For a significant number of children attainment is low in aspects of their personal, social and emotional development, communication language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Nevertheless, children achieve the very challenging targets they are set and make outstanding progress in all areas of their learning because of the nursery's exceptional provision. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make equally good progress because of the high quality systems that are in place to support them. By the time they leave the nursery almost all children are working at, or beyond the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

A very strong emphasis is placed on supporting children's personal development and well-being. All adults act as extremely good role models, and through their play children are encouraged to work together and develop confidence as learners. They make outstanding progress and quickly learn to share, co-operate and negotiate as they

work hard to keep the school's golden rules of being kind, gentle, caring and happy. Children's attendance is good. They are enthusiastic, highly motivated and thoroughly enjoy their time at school. This enjoyment of school is reflected in their extremely good behaviour and increasing ability to concentrate for extended periods of time. These skills prepare children exceptionally well for the next stage in their education and provide an excellent foundation for their future economic well-being. Very good provision is made for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children delight in each other's company, form constructive relationships with each other and with adults and increasingly learn to appreciate and understand features of the natural world and the customs and beliefs of other cultures. Children contribute well to their local community by, for example, singing for residents of a sheltered housing complex near the school. The school actively promotes healthy living. Children enjoy eating fruit at snack time and being very active in the school's spacious and well-resourced outdoor area.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teachers and nursery nurses work extremely effectively as a team to provide children with very high-quality learning experiences. They plan activities that take full account of children's stages of development and of their interests and abilities. This is possible because staff gather frequent and accurate information about children's achievements to check the progress they are making. This information could be better organised and easier for staff to use as a guide to their planning if the progress being made by children particularly at the lowest levels of attainment was recorded as one continuous process. Resources are used in a very imaginative way and the variety of activities provided is exceptional. Planning is evaluated and modified on a weekly and, sometimes daily, basis to take account of children's changing needs. Consequently no time is lost and children's learning moves forwards at a rapid pace. Staff have exceptionally high expectations of what children can achieve and set very challenging targets for the children and their own teaching. The focus on developing children's personal, social and emotional skills together with their communication skills is very effective in support of children's learning in all areas. As children's confidence grows and their involvement in activities is increasingly successful their ability to learn effectively greatly improves. Just the right amount of support and challenge is provided for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to enable them to learn as well as other children. This is also true for children who are identified as having particularly advanced skills or talents.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is extremely good because staff plan a very wide range of stimulating activities that take full account of what children already know whilst challenging them

to learn something new. Activities invite children to explore and investigate and this provision supports their developing independence very well. Staff encourage, support and guide children rather than direct them and this enables children to make choices and take responsibility for the decisions they make. These opportunities are a key feature of curriculum planning and contribute significantly to children's learning overall. Children's experiences in all areas of learning are extended very well through the use of visits and visitors. The well-resourced outdoor area is used extremely well to support children's learning and provides opportunities for learning that are particularly important for children who learn best by being very active. The school's links with other schools and its work as a 'Forest School' provides additional very successful learning experiences that are much enjoyed by children and supported by their parents.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Procedures to ensure the health and safety of children are very robust and rigorously implemented. Staff know the children and their parents very well and work extremely hard to support them as families. The care provided for children is excellent and parents rightly see this as a real strength of the school. The warmth of the support provided for children helps them to learn extremely well, develop positive relationships, follow safe practices in their play and develop eating and exercise habits that will support their following a healthy lifestyle in later life. Parents value the support they and their children receive as a result of the school's links with outside agencies. Academic support for children is exceptional because assessment information is used so well to guide planning and teaching.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are exceptionally effective in bringing about improvements as the school strives for excellence in all it provides. The headteacher leads by example and empowers her staff who readily accept responsibilities and work extremely effectively as a team. School self-evaluation is rigorous with every aspect of the school's work being scrutinised to identify aspects that could be improved. It includes regular canvassing of parents and children so their views and ideas can be included in the school improvement process. Staff are very self-critical but also very supportive of each other. They are active in improving their own skills with the aim of continuously raising the effectiveness of the school's provision so that every child has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good and the ability of staff to take the school forward even further is extremely good. Constructive working partnerships with outside agencies, neighbouring schools and parents make a very significant contribution to children's learning and personal well-being. Governors know the school well and through discussions and visits monitor its work closely and are very involved in its improvement. The excellent relationships that exist in the school enables governors to be very effective in carrying out their responsibilities.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

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	2	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	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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	2	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	1	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 very much for being so friendly and helping me find out about all the things you like doing at your nursery. I especially enjoyed talking to you and watching you play. You behave really, really well and I know you have lots of fun at school. All the grown ups really enjoy working at the Nursery and are very proud of you. They want you to do the very best you can. You learn a lot because they take extremely good care of you and give you such exciting things to do. They understand what you can do and what you need to learn next. I have asked them to make the way they write down what they know about you better, so it is easier for them to check how well all of you are doing. You and your parents think you go to a really great school and I agree. It was lovely to meet you all. I wish you all the very best for the future and am sure your school will continue to be an exciting place for you to be.