



# Whitecross Nursery School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 112480  
**LEA** City of Derby LEA  
**Inspection number** 278938  
**Inspection dates** 21 November 2005 to 22 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs. Susan Hall LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery	<b>School address</b>	Watson Street
<b>School category</b>	Maintained		DE1 3PJ
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 6		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 371 876
<b>Number on roll</b>	92	<b>Fax number</b>	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr.Simon Birkett
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. Fran Harvey

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 6	<b>Inspection dates</b> 21 November 2005 - 22 November 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 278938
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This is an average sized Nursery school that serves not only the local area, but also attracts many children from other parts of Derby and which reflects a very wide social mix. Almost all children are of White British descent and a small minority speak English as an additional language. The number of children with special educational needs is average, with these children having a range of difficulties or disabilities.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Whitecross Nursery is a good school with some outstanding features. Parents are unanimously delighted with all the nursery does for their children. Children enjoy their time there and many are disappointed when they can't attend. The inspection findings support the school's assessment of its overall effectiveness. The school provides good value for money. Children enter the nursery with skills that are often above those expected for their age. They make good overall progress, achieve well and exceed the targets expected of them. Teaching and learning are good and many aspects of care, guidance and support are outstanding. Children are valued highly as individuals and are fully included in all that the school has to offer. Their welfare and care are given the highest priority and the school has an outstanding commitment to their well-being. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities are given good quality help. Children behave very well; they like school and attend regularly. Leadership and management are good and there are some aspects of the headteacher's work that are outstanding. There have been effective improvements since the last inspection. Staff have successfully tackled the issues identified for improvement and the school is well placed to continue to move forward. A strength is the continuing high level enthusiasm of a committed and long serving staff team. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are satisfactory but lack the evaluative rigour to identify the small steps required for further improvement. The school accommodation is satisfactory and staff have accurately identified the improvement of the outside area as a key issue for further development.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Develop the outdoor learning area to provide better quality play equipment to help improve physical and social development. - Ensure that the monitoring and evaluation of activities is sufficiently rigorous to identify the small steps necessary to improve the quality of teaching and learning even further.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children start nursery with skills and knowledge, which, whilst very wide ranging, are generally above average. The school has high expectations of what the children can achieve, and they are keen to live up to them. By the time children leave the nursery they are well on line to exceed the targets expected in all areas of their learning. Most are happy, confident and articulate children for their age. Whilst there is no national test data to compare achievement with that in other schools the checks the school uses to measure the progress made indicate good progress in all areas. Inspection findings fully endorse the assessments made and the maintenance of the positive picture of achievement seen in previous inspections. All children make good progress and achieve well.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Children's personal development and well-being are central to everything that the school does and this has a very positive impact on the progress that is made. The inspector agrees with the school that overall this aspect is outstanding. All children develop very positive attitudes to school and their own learning. Children say they love coming to nursery and parents note they are sometimes upset when it is closed. Attendance is good and children behave very well. Bullying is not an issue. Children feel safe and very happy and know there is always someone to comfort them if they are sad. For their age children have a good understanding of how they can be fit and healthy. The school works very successfully to enable the children to start to make decisions about what they are doing and to take on small but increasing responsibilities such as collecting beakers and taking items to members of staff. The school sets great store by helping children to develop good manners and there is clear encouragement to say 'please' and 'thank you' and to think how they can help others. Staff are very consistent in their expectation of good behaviour and of taking turns so that even the quietest and least confident child soon begins to blossom and develop more self-esteem. The moral and social development of the children is very strong and they are continually helped to develop awareness of how their actions can make a difference to one another. Children of all abilities develop a wide range of skills that equip them well for later life and learning although they have limited opportunities to develop an understanding of other cultures.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, which matches the school's own evaluation. Because the staff know the children well they are very keen to please those around them and to live up to the high expectations of both their work and behaviour. Staff ask a good range of questions, not only to check what the children know and understand, but also to encourage their descriptive language. Support staff play a very strong and effective role in working with groups which ensures all children receive a good level of help that extends learning well. Occasionally, when teaching is not as effective as in the best lessons, it is because activities lack the spark that captures the imagination of the children. In some creative activities, for example, too much use is made of adult produced materials, or staff allow quieter children to remain at the edge of activities. There are excellent record keeping systems that very carefully track the progress children make, especially in their personal development and language skills. This information is used well, not only to ensure follow up activities are relevant, but also to inform parents and subsequent schools exactly what the children know, understand and can do.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Curriculum planning is good because the staff plan a wide range of activities that take account not only of what the children already know but also provide stimulating new learning experiences. All aspects of the curriculum are given good coverage with activities suited to the age and level of maturity of the children. Staff make good use of the outdoor learning environment even in the very coldest weather despite the limitations of the area and the equipment. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and the very small number of children speaking English as an additional language, who are well supported so that they grow in confidence and self-esteem. The school makes good use of the local area, visits and visitors to extend learning. Following the last inspection, staff increased the opportunities for children to make choices in their learning and take responsibilities. However, at times activities are still too directed by adults. There are also relatively few planned opportunities to develop an understanding of cultures other than their own. These factors mean inspection judgements do not match the excellent evaluation of the school in this regard.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The care, support and guidance of children is outstanding, which reflects the school's own evaluation. Staff know the children and their families extremely well. All adults care for the children in an excellent manner, with parents rightly seeing this as a strength of the school. The high priority that the school gives to children's well-being is shown in the warmth of support offered. This is also seen in how effectively staff encourage children to follow safe practices in their work and play and follow a healthy life style when looking after one another. Child protection and health and safety procedures are thorough and consistently supported by all staff. The school works very effectively with other agencies to ensure that children and their families experiencing difficulties are supported to the fullest. Parents speak glowingly of this support. Children are also supported very well academically because of the extensive procedures in place to check on how well they are doing.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management of the school are good overall, a judgement that matches the school's own evaluation. The headteacher plays an outstanding role in supporting the pastoral care of the children and their carers, established and maintained over a long period of time. Because of this, families from several miles away choose to come to Whitecross and wholeheartedly support the school, ensuring that it is popular and over-subscribed. The headteacher's interpersonal skills and strong relationships, based on the appreciation of others' talents, ensure all staff work really effectively together to achieve a tremendous team spirit in the school. Self-evaluation procedures are

effective and enable the staff to accurately identify what needs to be improved in resource areas such as the outdoor play facilities. However, the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning is informal, lacks rigour and does little to identify the small steps necessary to make even further improvements. Governance of the school is good. Governors are supportive, very appreciative of the high quality personal care provided for the children, and are working hard to develop their role as a critical friend of the school. The school runs smoothly and efficiently, with the current large budgetary surplus clearly identified to improve the outdoor areas.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	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	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	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	2	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	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	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	3	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	2	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	NA
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**

Following my visit I would like to let you know what I found out about your Nursery. You probably saw me around the school and when you went outside to play. But first I'd like to say a big thank you to everyone for being so friendly and helping me to find out about all the things you like doing. It was really nice to talk to you and see how much you love coming to school. I have told the staff how well behaved you were and I know they are really proud of you. It was very nice to hear how you feel that all the grown ups take really good care of you. I have talked to the staff about how they can make things even more fun for you by changing the outside area and getting some new equipment for you to play on. Staff are also going to look even harder at the teaching in different groups and at your work to see if you are finding learning fun and enjoyable. The staff really enjoy working at the Nursery and want you to do very well, and they have some great ideas to make school even more exciting. All of you can help them by working as hard as you can and being kind and helpful to everyone. It was lovely to meet you all.