



Alfreton Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112485
LEA DERBYSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 278941
Inspection dates 5 July 2006 to 6 July 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Sue Hall AI

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Grange Street DE55 7JA
School category	Community		
Age range of pupils	3 to 4		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01773 520031
Number on roll	99	Fax number	
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Gill O'Hagan
Date of previous inspection	10 January 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Angela Stanton

Age group 3 to 4	Inspection dates 5 July 2006 - 6 July 2006	Inspection number 278941
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a nursery school in Mid-Derbyshire. The area is below average in terms of social and economic features and all children are of White British heritage. The movement of children to and from other schools is average as is the proportion with learning difficulties or disabilities, although this proportion is now rising. The school is part of a Children's Centre which has recently been opened. The school has won numerous awards in a range of areas, was previously a Beacon School and is involved in many local and national projects.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Alfreton Nursery provides an outstanding quality of education in all areas of its provision. This judgement matches the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. The nursery is a happy, vibrant and stimulating place which enables children to see learning as fun and therefore make, as some parents note, 'magnificent' progress in their early development. This is a fully inclusive school that warmly welcomes and cares for all children and their families. A strength is the exemplary leadership of the headteacher which, together with the whole staff's sheer enthusiasm for their work, provides a challenging and enjoyable start to learning. The school provides excellent value for money and has the capacity to continue to improve. Children enter the school with skills and knowledge that are very wide ranging but overall are below, and sometimes well below average. They make excellent progress and achieve standards that are at least average and often exceed the targets for their age. This is due to the outstanding quality of teaching which involves children in making choices in their learning and motivates them to try hard. Governors and staff continually question their effectiveness and are aware of the need to ensure the systems to monitor the work of the school are more rigorously evaluative. Staff are determined to create a place where everyone 'can be the best they can be'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to develop a more rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children enter the school with limited skills. They are below average overall and often well below average in areas of communication, language and literacy. The speaking and listening skills of many children are under-developed. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is restricted with several having little experience of life beyond their immediate surroundings. Early mathematical, creative and physical skills are also often limited. With high quality and stimulating teaching children make rapid progress and at the end of their time in nursery standards are generally average and for several standards are above average including information and communication technology (ICT). They make very good progress in both their social development and ability to communicate with those around them. Many become enthusiastic learners. The school sets its own challenging targets both for individuals and groups of children which are usually met. All children, including those recognised as gifted and talented and others with learning difficulties and disabilities make outstanding progress. Overall, girls and boys achieve very well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. The school places a keen emphasis on enabling children to make choices in their learning. This is seen in the pictures they choose to talk about when sitting on the magic story chair or in the art materials they wish to be included as the role play area changes into an art studio. Children's involvement in their own learning is excellent and allows them to really enjoy activities especially when they are awarded 'clever badges' for their achievement. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. While many children are still very focussed on their own needs, staff clearly encourage an awareness of others. Behaviour and attendance are good overall. The school is successful in providing a physically challenging outdoor area and encourages a healthy lifestyle through the loan of 'activity sacks' of play equipment. Children feel very safe in school and good use is made of 'The Magic Room' (a sensory area) used, amongst others, by the inclusion care officer to help children reflect on their feelings and as a base for therapy sessions.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding and ensure children make very rapid progress. All staff share very high expectations of children's behaviour and of what they can achieve, as seen when cutting pieces of imaginary food into fractions for 'The very hungry caterpillar'. Staff manage the behaviour of sometimes boisterous children well. From an early stage staff recognise when children are gifted and talented or when they have learning difficulties and disabilities. The school has developed its own excellent range of assessment routines and records which are used to check and track the progress individuals and groups of children make. This information is used in an exemplary manner to inform planning to provide the highest appropriate level of challenge. This is reflected in groupings for activities including story time and music where a different but well matched level of challenge is offered for the 'advanced' group. The teaching of ICT skills is outstanding, enabling children to use computers and other devices confidently.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding, reflecting the large amount of time and effort spent planning how to make learning fun and challenging. There is a very strong emphasis on developing children's communication skills with lots of well planned discussions enabling them to use a wider vocabulary and become more confident in their abilities. A particular feature is the excellent provision for ICT which supports cross-curricular learning very effectively. This ensures children develop the skills that equip them well

for later life. There is a very good balance of teacher directed and independently chosen tasks. Activities indoors and out make very good use of high quality play equipment for which the children are expected to develop a sense of responsibility. Staff work very effectively to enrich children's learning through a wide range of visits and visitors which enhance their life experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support of children are outstanding and underpins everything that the school is about. There are excellent relationships with an extensive range of agencies, including Health and Social Services, which support arrangements for safeguarding children. Working closely with the Pre-School Learning Alliance the nursery has led a pioneering project to develop the very recently opened Children's Centre to provide care for all children and their families including those who are vulnerable. The school has also led the way in developing services, including an aromatherapy and massage project and use of the sensory room, to help children remain calm and develop understanding of their own feelings. The school has outstanding procedures to track the progress that children make in their personal and academic development. This is a strength and the use of such information is a crucial factor in the school's success in promoting children's achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management of the school are outstanding. A pivotal influence on school development is the calm but very focussed and purposeful lead provided by the very skilled headteacher. She is ably supported by all staff, many of whom are long serving and very committed to the children and families they support. This strong staff team works well together continually questioning what they provide which has a positive impact on school improvement planning. The quality of their work has been recognised locally and nationally through a range of awards and projects which spur the staff on to look to the future and never become complacent. The school accurately evaluates the quality of education it provides and identifies the small steps needed for continuing improvement in the development of the newly established children's centre. Governance of the school is good and governors and staff are committed to further developing their role in rigorously monitoring the work of the school. Parents are very pleased with the quality of education offered and are well informed and consulted about how the school can be improved.

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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	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	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	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	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	2	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 making me feel so welcome when I visited your nursery and for talking to me so happily. It was nice to see how much you enjoy the things you do. I particularly liked listening to your ideas for stories when you sit on the magic story chair, seeing you use your new art studio and watching you cut paper fruit shapes into fractions. All the adults who work with you make sure your nursery is a happy place where you can learn a lot. You are doing very well with your work and are usually well behaved. Your parents told me that they are very pleased at how well you do and how much you like school. Your nursery is outstanding and the staff, headteacher and governors all work hard. They look after you very well and make sure you know what to do. I have asked them to make sure that when they check the work of the school, they do this even more carefully. I hope you will carry on having fun and learning so much. I really enjoyed visiting your school and meeting you all.