

# Ashfield Nursery School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108427
<b>Local Authority</b>	Newcastle upon Tyne
<b>Inspection number</b>	288096
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Graeme Clarke

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	85
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Alison Priestley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Anne Stoker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2001
<b>School address</b>	Elswick Road Elswick Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE4 6JR
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 2735587
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 2734022

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–4
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 June 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	288096

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 nursery school is part of the Westgate Children’s Centre. It serves part of the west end of Newcastle, parts of which have high deprivation. The children come on a full-time basis and a large proportion receive free school meals. Their starting points when they begin nursery are very low compared to the average of children of the same age. Almost half the children are from a White British heritage. The others are mostly from African, Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi backgrounds, and between them they speak twelve different community languages. A high proportion (46%) of children learn English as an additional language. A very low proportion of children have specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Ashfield Nursery is an outstanding school. Parents have total confidence in the school and hold the care and education it provides in exceptionally high regard. One family's comments sum up their views: 'The teachers at Ashfield have the children's interests at the top of their agenda', and 'You are greeted with a friendly welcome from every member of staff which makes a happy environment for our children to work in'. Outstanding teaching, a very rich and exceptionally well managed curriculum, and outstanding care, guidance and support reflect the school's clear philosophy that, here, every child does matter and that everyone will be helped to develop and learn as well as they can. This is an outstandingly inclusive school in which all children achieve well and, of particular note, make truly excellent progress in their personal development.

Children's starting points when they begin nursery are very low in comparison with the attainments of most children of the same age. They make outstanding progress in communication, language and literacy as well as in their physical and creative development and knowledge of the world. In mathematical development, their achievement is good but many do not fully attain the goals set nationally for their age. This is a priority for improvement that the school has already identified. The children readily make friends and play well with their classmates, whatever their backgrounds. They thoroughly enjoy school and work very enthusiastically. They are delighted when they do well and happily share the success of others. They are exceptionally well behaved and act safely and sensibly both inside and out-of-doors. Children soon learn about the importance of personal hygiene, healthy food and drinking water, and they vigorously take part in physical activities to develop their coordination and stamina. They rapidly grow in confidence and at the end of their time in the nursery they are ready to move on to the Reception classes in primary schools where their good basic skills stand them in good stead.

The leadership of the headteacher and her senior team stand out in the way they promote children's achievements and development. Governors, too, play a very effective role in ensuring the school is extremely well managed and administered. Governors and staff carefully review and judge the quality of the school's work, and although their judgements of the curriculum, care, and leadership are modest, they accurately identify areas for improvement such as the children's mathematical development. The school has very effectively addressed the issues raised at the last inspection and has continued to foster improvement since then. The track record of improvement and the systematic way senior leaders manage the school; the outstanding personal development of the children; and the excellent progress they make in almost every area demonstrate outstanding value for money. The school has an outstanding capacity for improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase achievement in mathematical development to the same high levels as the other areas of learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

Children's achievement is outstanding. This is a result of outstanding teaching, and an excellent curriculum that is carefully managed to foster their progress. In 2006, from levels of attainment that were very low, most children made excellent progress in both their personal and physical

development and exceed the standards expected for children of their age. It is only in mathematical development where their achievement is good rather than outstanding and standards are lower than in all other aspects of their development; most children do not reach the nationally expected standards. The school is taking action to improve achievement in mathematics but it is too soon to see the effect of this work. Girls make marginally better progress than boys. Those children who are in their first year in the school learning English as an additional language make good progress in developing communication skills, and those who are in their second year make excellent progress. The few children who have specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make excellent progress, especially in their personal and social development.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are also outstanding. Children are successfully taught to respect and value the achievements of others. They also thoroughly enjoy their own accomplishments. They take part in practical activities with sheer enthusiasm, become engrossed in creative work, and sing along in action songs with gusto. Attendance is broadly average for nursery schools in Newcastle and, although it is adversely affected by childhood illnesses, it is particularly affected by children making extended visits to their countries of origin. Children play and work constructively with their classmates and are impeccably well behaved. They pay close attention to their teachers and teaching assistants. They quickly learn the routines necessary for orderly behaviour, for example by following instructions in classrooms and outdoors promptly and tidying away quickly. They conduct themselves safely and sensibly, such as when using cutlery and scissors, and when moving around indoors or using the outdoor facilities. They are polite and can easily hold simple conversations with adults. Children successfully learn about personal hygiene, healthy food, and willingly and energetically take part in physical activities. Many show they can learn well in groups or on their own when they become engrossed in their work. This, together with their good basic information technology skills, prepare them well for the next stage in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Children learn extremely well as a result of outstanding teaching. Strengths come from diligently planning sessions in which teachers' knowledge of each child's next steps in learning is used when designing activities to foster their progress. Furthermore, planning is undertaken jointly so that teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants all play their parts together. Adult-directed activities result in well-managed learning and well-established classroom routines, resulting in outstanding learning and excellent progress. Such activities help individual children to learn English; small groups to develop hand-eye coordination when using a pencil, handling cutlery or cutting around shapes; and class groups to work together when making music and singing action songs. Children take part with great enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment. Children are supervised very effectively when they choose their own activities, such as outdoors where adults have a careful overview of activities where there is potential risk. They intervene where appropriate, for example to support and guide skill development such as in ball handling.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is outstanding. It is extremely well managed and leads to children making exceptional progress in almost all areas of learning. A thoroughly well designed and comprehensive programme of activities covers the nationally agreed areas of learning of the Foundation Stage. All aspects of children's personal development are taken into careful account during the two years which some children spend in the school. The curriculum effectively exploits the indoor facilities and makes extensive use of the sheltered terrace and garden area with its climbing equipment, football pitch, grassy hill, sand and soil pits and allotment garden. In addition, children's experience is greatly enhanced by a rich programme of visits. Central to the success of the curriculum is the way it is tailored to suit individual children and to promote their learning through making effective use of the facilities and resources available.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Pastoral care is exemplary. Arrangements to safeguard children and promote their welfare are in place. Although the school is housed in an old building, care is taken to ensure the health and safety of everyone both in and out-of-doors. The school has extremely effective partnerships with the local community, parents and specialist support staff so that, for example, the curriculum is enriched and arrangements for learning English as a new language are very effective. Teachers keep a very close eye on children's achievements and track their progress diligently. Importantly, they set targets to foster each child's progress through the week and to check how well they are learning. This approach in very large measure leads to the very good and often outstanding progress children make during their time in the school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are outstanding in the way they promote children's achievements and development. Following her appointment since the last inspection, the headteacher, ably supported by the staff with leadership responsibilities, makes sure that each child is able to develop and learn as well as they can. Their work is responsible for the children's outstanding achievement. The school places a high priority on ensuring that the quality of all the staff's work is carefully monitored so that they continue to enhance their skills through training and support. Governors are dedicated in ensuring the school is well led and, through their substantial commitment, they have a very clear knowledge of its work. They usefully share the review and evaluation of its quality with senior and other staff. In turn, improvement planning has very successfully led to the excellent promotion of children's personal development throughout the curriculum. Diligent arrangements for monitoring children's progress and attainment have led to the school quickly making their mathematical development a priority.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### 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>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

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

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



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

25 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Ashfield Nursery School, Tyne and Wear, NE4 6JR.

I really enjoyed my visit to your school. Thank you for helping me when I came into your classrooms and outdoors to see you at work. You were very polite and really helpful. I was impressed with those of you whom I met and I did enjoy talking to you. It was great to see how much you enjoy coming to school and how you enjoy school life. I know the headteacher and the staff are all very proud of you.

Your school is very warm and welcoming and is very well organised. I'm pleased that you are safe and happy because Mrs Stoker and all the adults in the school look after you very well. I really like the way you play well together and work hard, and to see you taking part in all the activities and having fun. Some of the things you do are very impressive – I really liked hearing the musical instruments some of you made, and the way you sing counting songs such as 'Five Little Frogs'. I've asked Mrs Stoker to help you to learn more about counting and about shapes.

Some of you will leave at the end of this year to join a new school. You have very many opportunities at Ashfield to learn about life and these should stand you in good stead for the future. I hope that you all do really well.

Yours sincerely

Graeme Clarke

Lead Inspector