



# Nightingale Infant School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 112725  
**Local Authority** City of Derby  
**Inspection number** 289386  
**Inspection dates** 16–17 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Geof Timms

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Amber Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Derby
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7		Derbyshire DE24 8FT
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01332348356
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	192	<b>Fax number</b>	01332 208257
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs W Stevenson
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs J Toombs
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 September 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is of broadly average size. Numbers have fallen since the last inspection due to local employment and housing issues. Nearly half of the children attend the Nursery on a part time basis. The school serves an area of high deprivation. The children are mostly from a White British background but there is a significant and growing minority from a range of other backgrounds, the most common of which are White and Black Caribbean and Travellers of Irish heritage. Most of the children are English language speakers but 14 other languages are spoken. The number entitled to free school meals is exceptionally high. An above average proportion of the children has learning difficulties or disabilities. The skills and levels of knowledge and understanding demonstrated by most children when they start school are well below those typically found for their age.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with some good features. Children's personal development is good and the school is very caring and ensures their well-being. This is necessary to help the children, many of whom are from severely disadvantaged backgrounds, to become more effective learners in the future. Staff work hard to help the children enjoy school and they clearly do. Although most children make satisfactory progress, standards remain low. However, they are improving and the school currently provides satisfactory value for money. The recent improvements made to, for example, the Foundation Stage, show that the school is correct in judging its capacity to improve as satisfactory.

The parents are very happy with the education provided at the school and particularly the level of care provided for their children. The school's partnership with parents and the wider community is good. The pupils' contribution to the school and the local community is also positive. One parent whose child has recently started school said, 'He has settled in and is really enjoying the experience.' This reflects the improving provision in the Foundation Stage where recent changes to the organisation, together with the good teaching, are beginning to have a positive impact on the progress made by the youngest children. These changes include a very well-resourced and interesting outdoor area. The pupils understand well how to keep healthy and safe. They develop sound skills that they will need for their future well-being. Although the attendance rate is below average, the school is doing all it can to improve this. This work has been assisted by the good work of the learning mentors who are offering a growing level of support to some families.

The teaching is satisfactory with some good features. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and this encourages them to take a full part in lessons. Pupils in the recently set up nurture group receive an outstanding level of effective support, enabling them to make good progress. At times the teaching lacks sufficient pace to keep pupils interested and motivated, and in some lessons too much time is spent by teachers talking and not enough time where pupils are actively engaged. The teaching is good where, for example, the phonic work is carried out in a snappy and well-structured way.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's leadership has been effective in creating a school where pupils are well cared for and their personal and social development is correctly a priority. There is good assessment and tracking information now in place but this is not always used to enable teachers to plan appropriately challenging lessons or to set appropriate targets for their children. Although supportive of the school in many ways, the governing body have not been sufficiently effective in monitoring the effectiveness of the school or the progress made by the pupils. Their meetings have not been as focused on teaching, learning or progress as they have been on premises and finance.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure more of the teaching is of at least good quality by improving the pace of lessons and using time more efficiently.
- Make better use of available assessment information to set appropriate targets for pupils and ensure work is well-matched to their needs.
- Improve the work of the governing body so they are more aware of the progress of pupils, the quality of teaching and learning and of the school's effectiveness overall.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Although most pupils achieve satisfactorily in their time at the school, given their very low levels of attainment when they start, many still have below average standards by the time they leave. Due to recent improvements made to the Foundation Stage, children are now beginning to make good progress. Progress previously has been satisfactory and the standards reached by the end of Reception well below those expected. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and the small proportion with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress due to the good extra support they are given, but the progress of those in the nurture group is good. The school is aware of the need to raise standards further and a good start has been made. Recent improvements in mathematics, and in speaking and listening, are the result of much hard work by staff and pupils and show that standards can be higher than they are. The test results in 2006 showed a further small rise over those in previous years, especially in reading and mathematics, and in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels. Inspection evidence indicates that these improvements are being maintained.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth, is good. They regard their school as 'kind and friendly' and they feel safe there, as well as being aware of how to keep safe outside school. 'Bench buddies' help to make play times more enjoyable social occasions. Adults present very positive role models, enabling most pupils to behave well and show consideration. A small nurture group provides a very high level of good support for those who need extra assistance and this helps them make good progress. Pupils enjoy school and the uptake on after-school clubs is high.

They are aware of the importance of eating healthily. They relish responsibility and involve themselves in numerous fund raising and community events. The learning skills they are developing, and the progress they make, help prepare them adequately for their future education. However, despite the school's best efforts to tackle lateness and improve attendance, rates remain below average.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with some good features. Good planning and secure relationships are consistent strengths. In the Foundation Stage, children achieve well because teaching is good and learning is fun. In lessons where teamwork between teachers and support staff is good, pupils of all abilities achieve equally well. However, sometimes undemanding and uninspiring activities slow progress. Where the teaching is only satisfactory, teachers sometimes talk for too long and, in lessons where the pace is leisurely, some pupils sit too passively at times while the teacher does most of the work. Teachers' expectations of what their pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Teachers are starting to track progress well, especially in writing, but this information is not yet used as well as it could be and target setting is at an early stage. Currently, pupils do not know their targets well enough to know what they need to do to improve. Teachers work very hard to create vibrant displays. They effectively camouflage the building's poor decorative state and help create a bright and interesting learning environment.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum that reflects well the diversity of the communities it serves. Strong emphasis on personal development, combined with an effectively revamped Foundation Stage curriculum, gives children a good start to their school life. Transition to Year 1 and the juniors is well structured. Recent initiatives such as 'Listening Phonics' and paired talking are beginning to have a positive impact on language skills. The introduction of ability groupings has gone some way towards ensuring work matches pupils' needs. Some tasks, however, are dull and undemanding. A good range of extra curricular activities, including a residential trip to Sherwood Forest, enriches the curriculum well. Visits and visitors add to the sense of enjoyment. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those with English as an additional language, have full access to the curriculum which results in them making satisfactory progress.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The school shows a high commitment to the welfare of pupils. Good systems are firmly in place to ensure that pupils are safe and secure in school and all the necessary checks on adults working with pupils have been completed and are carefully recorded. There is a high proportion of pupils in need of personal support and these receive good guidance for their particular needs through the learning mentors. The mentors know pupils and their families well and work closely with the staff in the school. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities receive good support and good quality targets in

their education plans are prominent in planning for their work. Those in the nurture group receive outstanding levels of support and this enables them to make good progress and take a full and successful part in school life. Target setting for the other pupils is not as well developed and this prevents some of the academic guidance not being sufficiently effective.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The leadership of the school is very focused on pupils' care and well-being, and this is rightly important due to the disadvantaged backgrounds many of them have experienced. The improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory and changes made over the last two years show that there is a satisfactory capacity to improve further. The headteacher recognises the need to raise standards and she provides sound leadership. The recent changes to the provision and the curriculum show a willingness to try new methods and ideas. The current plans to develop the work of the senior management team are appropriate and provide a focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Other leaders, such as those who lead on literacy and numeracy, special educational needs or the Foundation Stage are already providing good direction in their areas. The governing body are supportive of the school and have a sound understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Although it is often difficult to recruit governors, the school has not had an effective curriculum committee recently and this has meant they are not sufficiently well informed about how well the school is doing.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

18 October 2006

Dear Children

Nightingale Infant School, Amber Street, Derby, DE24 8FT

Thank you very much for the way you welcomed us to your school. Thank you also for the very friendly way you talked to us and shared with us what you think about being at the school. We particularly enjoyed watching the harvest festival and the 'Dingle-dangle scarecrows'.

You told us you are happy at the school and we could see that is true from the way you worked and played while we were there. We think you are lucky to be at the school because all of the grown-ups who work there are very caring and look after you well. They keep you safe and encourage you to keep healthy. Most of you are well behaved and this helps your teachers help you to learn - keep it up!

They also try and get you to work hard so you can learn some new things. We think that to do this so you learn even more, teachers need to:

- make sure lessons have lots of different activities for you to do to keep you interested
- make sure the work is at the right level so you learn new things
- make sure you know what you need to do to improve and help you to do this; and
- the school's governors need to find out more about what happens in lessons.

Thank you again for helping us with our inspection. Enjoy your time at Nightingale and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms

(Lead inspector)