



The Gainsborough Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 126563
Local Authority LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number 293588
Inspection date 14 February 2007
Reporting inspector Sue Hall

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	North Marsh Road
School category	Maintained		Gainsborough
Age range of pupils	3–5		Lincolnshire DN21 2RR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01427 811610
Number on roll (school)	89	Fax number	01427 811610
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Ally Edson
		Headteacher	Mrs Alison Stopp
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small nursery school in Lincolnshire. The nursery is within an area of social and economic deprivation. The large majority of children are of White British heritage with a very small number of children speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of children with learning difficulties or disabilities is above the national average. The school is part of a designated children's centre and is involved in numerous projects to support children and their families and has High/Scope accreditation.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Gainsborough Nursery provides a good quality of education. There are several outstanding features, particularly in the care and support given to the children. The nursery is an integral part of a children's centre and has excellent working relationships with the local community, including many external agencies. Parents are very happy with the quality of education their children receive with one noting; 'I'm so happy that my daughter is here, it's a fab place.'

Children enter the nursery with skills and knowledge that are below average for their age. This is particularly in their personal and social development and communication skills. The school goes to great lengths to build children's emotional confidence, recognising that as this improves, so do their skills in other areas. Inspection findings confirm that almost all children, including the high proportion with learning difficulties or disabilities, make good overall progress and for some, progress is outstanding. They become confident and independent learners and by the time they leave the nursery, standards are in line with what is expected for their age and sometimes above this.

The personal development of children is good. They enjoy their time at nursery and say they particularly like outdoor playtimes. Many identify the things they can do to lead a healthy lifestyle, but staff recognise there is much to do to help children to make healthy choices. Children make a good contribution to the school community. There is a clear emphasis on developing independence and the basic skills that equip them well for later life.

Teaching and learning are good. All staff have very good relationships with children and offer lots of encouragement to them. There is a good focus on communication skills but at times, staff miss opportunities to model and get the children to repeat key vocabulary. The curriculum is outstanding with a whole school focus on the development of emotional competence and independence leading to rapid gains in these areas. The care, guidance and support of children is outstanding. The way in which the staff respond to children's needs is excellent. Staff carefully track the progress that children make as they move through the school. This information is then used well to inform planning.

Leadership and management of the nursery are good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and works extremely effectively with the wide range of users of the children's centre. School self-evaluation is good. However, while there are suitable opportunities to monitor the work of the school, evaluations are often descriptive and not as rigorous as possible in identifying areas for further improvement. Governance is satisfactory. The school provides good value for money and, with staff working well together, has good capacity to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the opportunities for staff, and where appropriate governors, to monitor and rigorously evaluate the work of the school in order to identify the small steps for further improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most children enter the nursery shortly after their third birthday. Many have previously attended the attached pre-school group and some have attended the baby unit prior to that. The school works closely with the pre-school and staff plan some activities together to ensure progression in what the children learn. Nursery records show that children are often entering with slightly higher level skills than in the previous inspection. Nevertheless, these skills are still largely below average especially in their personal development and communication skills. Few speak at length or use a wide vocabulary for their age. While children are happy and settle well, initially few are independent and able to do things for themselves.

During their time in nursery children make good progress in all areas of their learning. At times they make outstanding progress, particularly in their personal and social development. They become much more confident and subsequently make good gains in their ability to speak and communicate to others. All groups of children, including the small number of higher attaining children and others with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress and achieve well. When they leave nursery many are working at or slightly above the levels expected for their age and standards are good overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's behaviour is good. They share equipment happily and enjoy the opportunity to plan who they will work with which helps them to develop friendships. There are excellent relationships with staff who all highly value the children's efforts. However, while children have good attitudes to learning at times, some do not try as hard as they could and rely on the adults around them. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children is good and staff ensure children develop greater cultural awareness through activities including current celebrations of Chinese New Year. Children have good understanding of safe practices. For example, they know that how they use the trikes and wheeled toys outside has to be safe for others. Children make a positive contribution to the school community through helping others and develop independence and basic skills which equip them well for later life. Many recognise the things they can do to lead a healthy lifestyle and readily accept the fruit snacks and fresh water available. However, there is more to be done to help children and their families make healthy choices in packed lunches. Attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good and there are some strong elements that help children develop positive attitudes and want to learn. In the extension activities for those of higher ability there are outstanding aspects in the high expectations of what the children can achieve. Teachers and teaching assistants act as key workers with small groups of children which ensures they work with an adult who is well known to them. Staff manage children well so that activities in the busy nursery are always purposeful. There is a good balance of adult led and child chosen activities. For instance, planning sessions for outdoor activities encourage children to ask a friend to work with them. Children know they have to ask someone if they can play together and that they can say no if they prefer. However, in other activities staff miss opportunities to model and encourage children to use key vocabulary and some children made little contribution to discussions.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The high quality stimulating environment is a credit to all staff who ensure that daily changes to what is available makes learning continually fascinating. The outdoor curriculum is outstanding in the provision that it makes to enhance children's physical and social skills. There are excellent opportunities to extend learning at home including through the use of more than one hundred story sacks for families to use. Staff plan activities well together as a team on a long-term and weekly basis to ensure that tasks extend learning in all the appropriate areas. Staff then adjust planning for their groups according to the needs of the children. Teachers have worked hard to develop activities that encourage emotional development and, for instance, provide opportunities for children to discuss what they have enjoyed at the end of activities. Extension activities are provided for those of higher ability and support activities for those who find learning difficult which supports their learning well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The warmth of the care provided for the children is an outstanding feature of Gainsborough Nursery and central to the ethos of everything that is provided for the children and their families. This is seen not only in the relationships the key workers have with the groups with which they work, but also typified in the way mid-day staff care for children who are ill. The warmth of such responses soon overcomes the children's distress and is reflected in the way other children also show concern for those who are ill. There are appropriate checks of those who help in school and good awareness of health and safety issues with rigorous procedures for protecting children from harm. Children feel happy, safe and secure and know there is always someone

to talk to. The school has very effective systems to check and track the progress children make in all areas of their learning. This information is collated and used well in shared planning that ensures that all children do as well as they should regardless of their ability or background.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides very good leadership and plays a pivotal role in ensuring the school does not rest on its successes but continually seeks to move forward. Staff work very well together as an enthusiastic and committed team. There are excellent partnerships with other agencies that promote the children's well-being. The headteacher is well supported by staff including the lead teacher who manages the tracking of children's progress well. The children's centre teacher provides very good teaching and extends the existing links with a wide range of users of the centre in a highly effective manner. There are appropriate procedures to monitor the quality of the work of the school. However, the observations of teaching and learning are not as extensive as often seen and at times descriptive rather than rigorously evaluative of what could be improved. The governing body is well led, but the group do not meet as regularly as many others and the programme of focussed visits to inform governors at first hand of what the school provides is not extensive.

Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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	2

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
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	2
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

15 February 2007

Dear Children

The Gainsborough Nursery School, North Marsh Road, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, DN21 2RR

Thank you very much for looking after me when I visited your nursery. I enjoyed chatting to you in lessons and at lunchtime. I think that there are lots of really good things about your school.

These are the things that I think are best.

- The staff care and look after you really well.
- The nursery has very good links with all the others who use the children's centre.
- The headteacher leads the school really well.

This is what I think could be even better.

- The staff and governors could check what happens in school more, so that they know what they can do to make things even better.

Thank you again for chatting to me. Enjoy your time at Gainsborough Nursery, make sure that you come to school regularly and remember to try hard all the time!

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead Inspector