

# Helen Gibson Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108663
<b>Local Authority</b>	South Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	309761
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gianna Ulyatt

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>	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	78
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs R Hudson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lynne Brown
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2005
<b>School address</b>	North Lane East Boldon Tyne and Wear NE36 0DL
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 5196846
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 5193404

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<b>Age group</b>	3-4
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## Introduction

This inspection was a Reduced Tariff Inspection carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- leadership and its impact on the work of the school;
- curriculum provision and in particular outdoor learning;
- the impact of teaching on children's achievement within the indoor environment.

Evidence was gathered from school performance data and other documentation, observations of teaching and learning, evaluations of children's activities, (including how they interact with each other and within their learning environment), parents' questionnaires and discussions with children, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Helen Gibson Nursery is situated in a socially advantaged area where the community is fairly stable. Children who attend come from mixed social backgrounds. There are a few children from minority ethnic backgrounds, although none are at an early stage of learning English. At present, there are no children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children attend for either morning or afternoon sessions. The school offers lunch to the children. It provides extended services to nursery children and pupils from the nearby infant school in the form of breakfast and after school clubs.

## 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 enjoy coming to school. They make new friends and particularly like creative and physical activity. The dedicated leadership of the headteacher has ensured that the school is moving forward in spite of recent staffing difficulties. Staff work as a united team to improve learning opportunities. Children, along with parents and carers, receive a warm welcome each day and the nursery uses this valuable opportunity to exchange important information. The majority of parents praise the school and are pleased with the way their children are developing in confidence. However, some feel that their views are not sought and they are not clear about the progress their children are making.

When children enter the nursery, their development is generally typical for that age. Their achievement is satisfactory during their time there. Underpinning children's progress is the good focus on personal development. As a result, children play amicably together and the majority behave well. Children develop good concentration skills, especially when activities motivate them. They enjoy discussing their ideas with adults and make good progress in their speaking skills. In mathematics, children develop a good understanding of how numbers are used for counting. Children increase their knowledge and understanding of the world through planned nursery activities, and through visits to inspiring woodland areas made possible by good links with local organisations. Children enjoy vigorous physical activity in the outdoor area. They paint, sing and dance with confidence. When they leave for the infant school, most children are at the level expected for their age and are suitably prepared to continue their education.

Teaching is satisfactory with good features. Children enjoy working with adults because relationships are good. Staff are sensitive to the needs of very young children, consequently children listen well and try hard to please. Staff often engage children in interesting discussions while at play. Staff plan the activities well that they are going to teach because careful attention is paid to what children are expected to learn. Planning for activities from which children can choose is limited and lacks challenge, therefore valuable learning opportunities are missed. As a result, a small number of children quickly lose interest when not directed. Adults observe regularly and make notes about children's learning. However this important information is not used systematically enough to track the rate of individual children's progress to ensure all are sufficiently challenged.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Each area of learning recommended for children of this age is planned within an overall topic and takes good account of seasonal changes and special annual events. The curriculum promotes children's personal development well. Role play activities are used well to support learning about being safe and healthy. For example structured play activities related to hospital life develop children's knowledge about the main body parts and the importance of good food, exercise and cleanliness. A good feature of the curriculum is the regular visits by groups of children to a local woodland area where they develop a deep respect for nature. Children look forward to being the 'special helper' and undertake their responsibilities seriously. The activities provided promote learning well. The school is aware, however, that the choice and range offered, on a regular basis, both indoors and outside, are not varied enough and do not include activities in all areas of learning. Plans are already in place to improve the outdoor facilities.

The nursery provides good levels of care for its children. Most staff members are experienced and show loyalty and commitment to the school. Relationships are good and children are comfortable with adults in this caring environment. The good care begins when staff visit children in their home prior to them joining the nursery. This opportunity is used well to find out as much as they can about each individual child. As a result, when children are admitted to the nursery, the majority settle well and quickly gain confidence in the new environment. A good contribution to the smooth continuity of each child's day is made by the provision of care for early mornings, lunchtimes and after school, in familiar surroundings and by staff who are well known to the children. Systems and procedures to protect and safeguard children are in place and adhered to. Staff are vigilant and have had recent training about protecting children.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has not completed a thorough review of the quality of its provision. The school's targets for improvement, therefore, do not fully reflect the main priorities for the school's development. The school has begun to gather data about the progress children are making, but the information is not being used well enough to ensure children are challenged through relevant activities. The governing body is relatively new and there have been many changes over the past three years, causing a lack of continuity. However governors are keen to support the school and extend their understanding of its performance. The school has improved since the last inspection and it has a satisfactory capacity to improve in future.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 3**

This is a nursery school, therefore the Foundation Stage is completely covered by the Overall Effectiveness section.

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

- Strengthen leadership at all levels and the effectiveness of its self-evaluation.
- Improve the level of challenge for all children in their work.
- Extend the range of activities from which children can choose, both indoors and outside.

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## Annex A

## 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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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

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

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

11 June 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Helen Gibson Nursery School, South Tyneside, NE36 0DL

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your nursery school. I really enjoyed my visit. It was lovely to talk with you about the things you were doing. You are very friendly and very polite.

I know you are well cared for in the nursery because you all get along well with the grown-ups. They often help you when you are playing. You enjoy dancing and singing to special music. It was lovely to see how well you share toys with your friends. Some of you are very good at helping adults tidy away at the end of the session.

You have been learning new things in the nursery. Some of you know many facts about parts of the body. You also know which foods to eat to keep healthy. I know you are learning to count well because I heard you counting the strawberries in the shop. Your parents told me how much you love the visits to the woodlands. I particularly enjoyed watching you playing outside in the garden. It was good to see you running very fast and climbing carefully on the equipment. I know you enjoy choosing activities for yourself and I have asked the school to provide even more for you, both inside and outside.

I know adults in the nursery watch you playing carefully and listen to what you are saying. They sometime write down things you say, and many of you are deep thinkers. Please talk as much as possible to the adults. This will help them to quickly find how much you know and how quickly you are learning. I have asked the school to find even harder jobs for you to do. I know some of you are ready for this.

I have also asked everyone in the school to look carefully at everything the nursery provides and at how well you are learning. The ideas they come up with should help the school improve.

I hope you continue to enjoy your time in your nursery school and that you make lots of new friends when you go to the reception class in the next school in September.

Gianna Ulyatt

Lead inspector