

Hetton-le-Hole Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108747
Local Authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	309786
Inspection dates	11–12 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Linda Buller

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	30
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Anthony Wilkinson
Headteacher	Mrs Claire Smith
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2005
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Victoria Street Hetton-le-Hole Houghton le Spring Tyne and Wear DH5 9DG
Telephone number	0191 5536700
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Age group	3–4
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The Nursery is situated close to the centre of Hetton-le-Hole. It serves a diverse social community as well as providing a number of commissioned places for children from vulnerable social backgrounds, some of whom are transported to the Nursery from further afield. Approximately 13% of children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In the maintained Nursery a few children attend full time but most attend part time, mornings or afternoons. Most children are White British. On leaving the Nursery children transfer to a range of Reception classes within the local area. In addition to the maintained provision there are placements for childcare for fifty weeks of the year from 08.00 to 18.00 each day, including places for twenty children under the age of three. A new headteacher took up post in September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with outstanding features. Children throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage achieve well and thoroughly enjoy their time in school. The school is aware of every child as an individual. It leaves no stone unturned in the pursuit of partnerships which extend the expertise, experience and resources needed to ensure that each child's needs are met. Staff quickly identify those children who are disadvantaged either socially or through difficulties in learning and their progress is carefully monitored.

Children's personal development and well-being are excellent. Most happily leave their parents or carers, confident in the excellent relationships they have with all staff and in particular with their named key worker. Parents too have every confidence in the outstanding care which their children receive. Staff keep parents well informed of their children's development. High quality information and effective channels of communication result in smooth transition between nursery and home. Staff are positive role models and children quickly develop an excellent understanding of good hygiene routines and the importance of healthy eating. Children behave very well; they follow instructions and know the actions they must take to ensure the safety of themselves and others.

Staff promote children's learning and development well through good teaching and a curriculum which is well planned with practical and engaging activities that allow children to learn through play. There is a good balance between those activities which are adult led and those which children choose for themselves. For example, children enjoy the independence of placing their name against the activity of their choice. There are occasions, however, when the school is not evaluating with sufficient rigour the daily experiences that children choose. The school is aware that such daily observations and, in particular, dialogue with children need to be more searching to ensure that all are engaged in activities which are relevant to their needs.

Babies and toddlers thoroughly enjoy exploring a stimulating range of areas and equipment. Staff talk to them as they play, introducing new learning and encouraging new skills. In the maintained Nursery the free flow of movement between the three classrooms and the use of an attractive outside area mean that children widen their learning experiences and grow in confidence. Children start school with skills below those expected for their age. Achievement is good and by the time they leave the Nursery most are working at the levels typical of children of their age in most areas of learning. This prepares them well for their next stage of education.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is skilled in building the self-esteem, confidence and expertise of staff. They share a clear vision for further improvement based on accurate self-evaluation. Thorough analysis of children's attainment provides the information needed to set challenging targets for the future. Effective management ensures there are sufficient qualified adults on site each day and that all procedures for the safety and welfare of children are known and followed consistently. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good. Through the good example of staff, children learn tolerance and respect for others. Visits into the local community and special events develop their understanding of the diversity of the world around them and their place within it. The recent addition of a community room has increased the school's ability to meet community need through the provision of a valuable resource for parents and groups such as local childminders and health care workers. Governance is now good. All of the issues identified at the time of the last childcare and maintained Nursery inspections have been successfully tackled. The school's accurate

self-evaluation and rising standards show that the school is providing good value for money and has a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that children have the opportunity to explore, in discussion, what they will learn during the activities they choose for themselves.
- Monitor the day-to-day experiences of children across the six areas of learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children achieve well. They start school with skills below those expected for their age. All make good progress because of good teaching and a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. By the time they leave the Nursery standards are broadly in line with those expected for children of their age in most of the six areas of learning. Children's achievement in writing is satisfactory but standards remain lower than in other areas. Children's personal, social and emotional skills are often low when they enter the Nursery. The sensitive care and support of all staff ensures they blossom to become confident, active learners who show excellent levels of independence when choosing their activities. The school has taken effective action to address the issue of the lower standards attained by boys. As a result, boys now demonstrate a greater interest in reading and writing activities and the gap between the standards attained by boys and girls has closed considerably. Early identification and support for those children who are vulnerable or have specific learning difficulties are a strength of the school. Consequently, these children make good and at times outstanding progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development is outstanding. Children are eager to come to school and levels of attendance have increased considerably since the last inspection. Children's enjoyment is evident. They quickly settle into school, rapidly becoming confident in tackling new activities and making new friends. They behave extremely well, readily take turns using equipment and understand the need to be careful to watch out for one another's safety when playing outside. Snack and lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions where all children are prepared to sample a wide variety of healthy food. They have a very good understanding of the need for hygiene routines, independently washing hands and taking responsibility for clearing plates and tidying up after themselves. Through activities such as 'around the world' days, visits into their local community and charity fundraising children are successfully developing respect for and positive attitudes towards a diversity of people and cultures. Children's developing knowledge of letters and sounds, how to solve problems for themselves and their growing self-esteem prepare them well for their next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Effectiveness in promoting children's learning and development

Grade: 2

All staff have a very good understanding of early years learning and development. They use this knowledge well to provide a balanced programme for children to choose activities and to work on tasks where adults take the lead. Rooms are bright and welcoming and staff provide

resources which engage children and stimulate curiosity. Activities are firmly based in play and are increasingly based upon children's interests and past experiences. Children have lots of fun in the outdoor area as they enjoy fresh air, explore for themselves and develop physically. Staff ensure that babies and toddlers have daily opportunities to play outside in their own area. They complement this provision well through regular use of the Nursery soft play area which safely develops children's mobility skills. Planning ensures that all six areas of learning are covered and the key skills which young children need to learn are being developed. Relationships between adults and children are excellent and this contributes to high quality interaction to support learning. Staff do not always provide children with an opportunity to discuss the activities that they choose for themselves. As a result, their progress is not as rapid at these times. Continuity in planning between the childcare provision and the maintained Nursery is now in place. School monitoring indicates that this is having a significant impact on the rate of progress made by those children who experience both settings.

Staff gain a picture of children's progress over time through regular assessments. They use this information well in planning future activities. Staff keep effective records of children's progress in their 'Learning Journeys' compiled in books that provide annotated photographic evidence highlighting each stage of development. Opportunities are sometimes missed to talk and listen to children when they are engaged in their own chosen activities. Staff place a high emphasis on making sure that all adults caring for the children are kept informed of children's developments, including Nursery staff, parents and any other carers.

Effectiveness in promoting children's welfare

Grade: 1

The promotion of children's welfare is outstanding. Each child has a key worker who looks after them and their families exceptionally well. Communication between home, school and other agencies is excellent. In this way children benefit from high quality continuous provision which results in good progress in their learning and huge strides in their personal development. Children are cared for and taught in a building which is well maintained with all the necessary equipment for hygiene routines readily available. Every care is taken to ensure that the school is safe and welcoming and that all safeguarding procedures are in place. Risk assessments are rigorous and all the necessary procedures are in place to prevent the spread of infection and to ensure that children who are hurt or ill are looked after well. Behaviour is managed very well; staff set clear boundaries that help children to develop an excellent understanding of how rules ensure the safety of themselves and others. There is a wide range of healthy meals and snacks provided which encourages children's good eating habits. For example, in the baby room raisins are devoured with enjoyment with each of the babies coming back for more. There is a clear complaints procedure in place.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher monitors the school's work successfully in a variety of different ways and self-evaluation is accurate. The evaluation of children's development is thorough, including the checking of teachers' planning and assessment data which is carefully analysed to identify stronger and weaker areas. Leaders use this information effectively to set priorities for further improvement. The analysis of boys' attainment led to changes in provision for reading and writing and subsequently a significant improvement in

standards. The headteacher's vision, skill and inspirational leadership has led all staff to work successfully as a team to agreed procedures and practices which ensure children thrive and develop in a safe and secure environment. Staff are highly trained and well qualified in their role as early years' educators. The creation of a new senior team involving staff from both the childcare provision and the maintained Nursery has enabled staff to take the lead in developing new ideas for managing whole school initiatives. This has been successful and has led to greater continuity of practice. Equality of opportunity for all children is central to the school's aims and staff ensure that all children are able to participate fully.

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.

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 is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
The standards[1] reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

15 September 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Hetton-le-Hole Nursery School, Sunderland, DH5 9DG

I know that you might need some help to read my letter but I am sure that someone will help you understand the good things I have to say.

Thank you for your warm welcome when I came to visit your school. I was very pleased to see how well you behave and that those of you who are new to the Nursery were settling in well. I especially enjoyed hearing all about the things you do at school. The things you told me really helped me with my work. I think your school is good. You are all working hard and making good progress in your learning. You thoroughly enjoy school and have great fun in lots of different activities. Your behaviour is outstanding. The adults in school look after you extremely well and this is helping you to learn how to look after yourself and your friends.

I have only asked grown ups in the school to do two things to make your school even better. They are:

- to talk to you about the things you can learn from the activities you choose
- to check that you are trying lots of different types of activities each week.

I know that your Nursery will continue to improve because your headteacher and the other adults are working hard to make things better all the time. Keep having fun!

Yours sincerely

Linda Buller

Lead inspector