

Hylton Red House Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108748
Local Authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	309787
Inspection date	19 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Gianna Ulyatt

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	73
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Richard Bell
Headteacher	Miss Diana Clark
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2004
School address	Rotherham Road Red House Estate Sunderland Tyne and Wear SR5 5QY
Telephone number	0191 5535405
Fax number	0191 5535405

Age group	3–4
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the effectiveness of leadership
- how well children are prepared for their future
- how well children achieve.

Evidence was gathered from school performance data and other documentation including the school's self-evaluation, 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 the school's own assessment, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

Children who attend the nursery come from a broad range of social backgrounds. The majority come from the immediate area in which the nursery is situated. This is an area of significant social disadvantage. Children attend on a part-time basis, although the nursery offers additional flexible sessions to those who require it. The nursery admits children who are three years of age twice a year; in September and in January. Therefore, some children spend up to five terms in the nursery setting before they go to the primary school. All children are of White British heritage. Approximately a third of children have learning difficulties and /or disabilities. The school offers a breakfast club, daily lunch, as well as 'wrap around' child-care. The school works in partnership with the nearby Children's Centre which is situated about half a mile away.

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 popular school that is well respected within the local community. It offers a good education for its children. The good and dedicated leadership of the headteacher has resulted in a democratic style of management whereby everyone is involved in proposed changes and improvements to provision. Therefore, all staff have a common sense of purpose and team work is particularly good. The school offers popular 'Family Learning' courses for parents which help establish good relationships with families. The strong links with the nearby Children's Centre benefit both children and their families. Parents are overwhelmingly delighted with the school. In the high number of questionnaire returns, parents praise the school because their children thrive in this caring environment. Parents see tremendous improvements to their children's progress and personal development. One parent, whose views are common to many, writes, 'I feel my child has progressed well while attending the nursery. Staff have shown considerable support to my child and myself in every area.' This is one of the reasons why children thoroughly enjoy their activities and why they bounce enthusiastically into school each day.

When children start the nursery, their skills are generally well below what is typical for their age. All children, including those with learning difficulties and /or disabilities, make good progress and achieve well. The reason for this is that staff have the children's interests and well-being at heart, and allocate time and attention to developing their personal skills. As a result, children are ready to learn. By the time they leave the nursery, their skills are just below those typically expected. They behave exceptionally well, learn to share and take turns and show kindness to others. Letters and sounds are introduced in fun ways. For example, children engage in fun activities to help them learn to hear sounds at the beginning of words. They learn to identify words that rhyme. Children are achieving well in communication, language and literacy, because conversations and attempts at writing are truly meaningful, and as a result some children 'write' spontaneously. For example, they draw maps and mark the exact spot for finding the treasure with a cross; others attempt to write their name on their art work. Children progress well in their mathematical understanding because good emphasis is given to this area through play, songs and rhymes. They recognise shapes and numbers and can raise the correct number of fingers when prompted. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is well promoted. They nurture plants, including strawberries, they look after stick insects and hatch out butterflies. Their imagination develops well because staff participate in role play, encouraging children to express their ideas and feelings creatively. Children regularly play outside and show good levels of confidence during physical activity.

Good teaching by well trained and experienced professionals is one of the main reasons why children achieve well. Staff are always close at hand helping and supporting children as they play. They nurture them through questioning and have high expectations of them. They encourage children to explore and investigate through a range of interesting activities. Planning promotes learning well because the school takes good account of children's interests, and reacts to them well by providing relevant activities. Children are well motivated and inspired to participate.

The outstanding curriculum is exciting and well planned and stimulates enthusiasm for learning. The extensive range of activities on offer includes opportunities to build a pirate ship, dig in mud, water plants, make food with sand, experiment with water chutes and dress up. These excellent activities allow children the freedom to pursue their own ideas and extend their

learning. In addition, visiting musicians, artists and theatre groups, as well as visits to a farm and the seaside, extend children's understanding of the community in which they live. Children already have a healthy approach to life. They enjoy fresh fruit and milk each day. They explain that, '...we have to wash our hands to get rid of germs'. They enjoy daily fresh air with many challenging activities that encourage vigorous exercise. Resources are chosen carefully to help children learn about our multi-cultural society. Children are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The nursery has certainly given children the confidence they need to move on because children say they are looking forward to starting the next school in September.

Care and guidance are good and pupils are very well looked after. Staff have responsibility for monitoring the progress of small groups of children. Consequently, adults know children very well. Parents comment favourably about having the opportunity, 'to discuss my child's progress one to one with the key worker'. Very good care begins before children start nursery. Staff visit children in their home and invite them to join a transition group before they nursery. This good practice helps children settle very quickly because they already know the adults and are familiar with the nursery environment. Links with the primary school are good and children visit on several occasions. Children also enjoy the opportunity to have breakfast and lunch in a safe environment with adults they know well. Systems and procedures to protect and safeguard children are in place and well adhered to. Staff are experienced and well trained. They are very vigilant and well informed about protecting children. Those who are vulnerable are very well supported.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides the staff with a very clear direction, resulting in an enthusiastic team who are very committed to providing a curriculum based on meeting the individual needs of every child. Self-evaluation clearly reflects the nursery's commitment to high quality provision. Training opportunities are very good and staff benefit from learning new ideas. The school's system to check children's progress is developing and the school is beginning to analyse data to ensure that all groups of children and individuals make the progress they are capable of. The school has recently improved the focus on phonics and early writing, and attainment in these aspects is improving. The school knows that girls generally achieve better than boys and is ready to take action to address this. The governing body is relatively new and there have been many recent changes, causing a lack of continuity. As a result, the capacity of the governors to monitor and challenge the school's work is currently limited; however, the school is aware of this, and governors are keen to offer their full support. Improvements since the last inspection are very good. The school has worked very hard to improve attendance and this is now at an average level. It is in a good position to further develop and offers good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

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

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the capacity of the governing body to take a stronger role in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

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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?	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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners 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 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	2

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.

Annex A

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 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 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	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

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

19 June 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Hylton Red House Nursery School, Sunderland, SR5 5QY

What a treat it was for me to visit your lovely nursery and to see how well you are enjoying yourselves! It was a pleasure to talk with you because you are so friendly and very well behaved. I liked finding the treasure from the map one of you drew. Your paintings are very colourful because you mix paint so well. Some of you made balls with mud and this made me laugh. It was lovely to see you carefully watering the plants and I bet you can't wait for the strawberries to ripen. I know you love playing outside because you have so many games to choose from. You are good at running, playing football, riding bikes and balancing. You are good at counting frogs on logs and many of you are learning how to write your name. Some of you can spot sounds at the beginning of words. How clever is that?

Adults work very hard to prepare many activities for you. This is because all the adults in your nursery really care about you. They know how quickly you are learning and they are always nearby to lend a hand when you need it. They often write about the new things you are learning and make sure you have harder things to do next time. That is why you are doing so well.

I have asked the governors, who help to manage your nursery, to look more carefully at everything the nursery provides. You can help them by answering questions and letting them know what you like doing best.

I know you are looking forward to starting the primary school because you told me so. The nursery has certainly prepared you well and given you lots of confidence. I hope you continue to enjoy your education in your next school.

With very best wishes

Gianna Ulyatt

Lead inspector