

# Ronald Tree Nursery School and Children's Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121782
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314097
<b>Inspection date</b>	3 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Barbara Crane

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	60
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	diana Batty
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rosalind J Parker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 March 2005
<b>School address</b>	Laburnum Crescent Kettering NN16 9PH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01536 514240
<b>Fax number</b>	01536 514240

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

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the children's achievement, the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum and how well the leadership and management promote improvement. Evidence was gathered from observations, discussions and records of assessments. Other aspects of the school's work were not inspected 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 in this report.

## Description of the school

This nursery serves a mixed area in which some families face challenging circumstances. It has very recently become part of a Children's Centre. The centre is starting to offer a wide range of extended services to families, such as health services and family learning programmes. Several ethnic groups are represented amongst the children and a small number are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average. When children start at the nursery, their attainment is below that expected 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: 2

This nursery gives children a good start to their education. It is a safe and welcoming environment because of the high level of daily care provided for children. Everything necessary is done to safeguard and protect them. There are excellent procedures for supporting children and their families as they join the nursery. The staff very effectively help parents to share their knowledge of children's development so far and raise any concerns. The care that the staff take in ensuring full parental involvement from the outset means that children feel secure and quickly gain confidence in their new setting. Children who feel upset or uncertain at any time are quickly guided and effectively comforted so that they can join activities.

Parents are full of praise for the way in which the staff support children's excellent personal development. One parent put it this way: 'Children ooze with confidence because they trust the people who look after them.' The adults are very good at helping children to see the benefits of sharing. Consequently, children are friendly and really enjoy working and playing together. This was well demonstrated in an outdoor play session where children were acting out the roles of police traffic officers and classmates who were 'motorists' thanked them politely as they were presented with speeding tickets. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their high level of independence is seen in the way that they self-register at the start of sessions, know where things are and organise their belongings. Their excellent behaviour helps to shape the warm and secure atmosphere of their community.

Children make good progress, from starting points lower than expected for their age when they enter the nursery. By the time they leave, children's good achievement means that most meet the expectations for their age in all areas of learning. Good teaching ensures children's success. The staff adopt a lively approach and give plenty of praise for children's efforts. This means that children are excited about learning and want to please adults by trying their hardest. They readily ask adults for help if they need to, but also learn to persevere. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because their needs are quickly identified and sensitively catered for. Support for children who are learning English as an additional language is effective and they make the same progress as others. Children's most rapid progress is seen in their personal, social and emotional development and many exceed the expectations for their age in this area. The meticulous assessments of children's development in this area show their gains clearly. Adults' high aspirations for children and their consistent approach support this fast progress very well.

Good planning that takes account of the next steps that children need to take supports children's good progress in basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Children's progress in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world is not as speedy as in other areas. This is because there are too few opportunities planned for children to observe, investigate and follow where their ideas take them. Assessments of children's progress in gaining knowledge and understanding of the world are not as robust as in other areas. As a result, adults too seldom recognise when particular children can learn faster than others and need more challenge in this area. They miss some opportunities to fully extend the most capable children's thinking through questions that probe their understanding of the world around them. Musical and other creative activities are popular choices with children. The ease with which children can access resources helps them to explore their creative ideas. Parents say that they and their children appreciate the music workshops that help them to enjoy music together.

The good curriculum supports children's well-being effectively. The bright displays and resources, including photographs of children as they learn new things, reflect children's home and community experiences. Parents enjoy talking to their children as they look at photographs together at the start and end of sessions and this reinforces children's learning. Children are keen to get into the fresh air and play actively in the well equipped outdoor areas. They know how to keep healthy and safe because of clear guidance from adults about hygiene and healthy eating. Adults use information and communication technology well to engage children's interest. Children frequently choose to work with computers and toy robots and work with them confidently.

The headteacher's leadership is principled and closely focused on enabling children to feel that they are valued members of the community. Parents say that her leadership inspires them with confidence. It also results in good teamwork by the staff. Staff work cheerfully with children and families and are united in their efforts to improve what is offered. Good self-evaluation means that the nursery has a secure view of what it does well and where further work is needed. The success in areas such as improving role play activities and interactions between adults and children to develop children's language shows the nursery's good capacity to improve. There are mainly thorough checks on assessments and data about children's progress and these are mostly used well to identify where improvements can be made. There is still work to do to check that planning, teaching and the effective use of assessment promotes the best possible rate of learning by children across all areas of learning. Governors provide good support through checking what is happening and are steadily developing their ability to ask the right questions to help the nursery to reflect on the effectiveness of its provision. The transition to being part of a Children's Centre has been achieved smoothly. The nursery works in close partnership with families, as well as a broad range of agencies, such as health services. Consequently, there is very effective support for vulnerable groups of children, such as those who are learning English, or those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

This section is not completed, as all of the children at the nursery are part of the Foundation Stage.

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

- Improve children's achievement in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world.
- More rigorously check that planning, teaching and the effective use of assessment promote children's best possible rate of learning.

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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?	1
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 <sup>1</sup> 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?	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
How well 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 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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<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>	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	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



## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

3 October 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Ronald Tree Nursery, Kettering NN16 9PH

Thank you for welcoming me and helping me to find out what makes your nursery such a special place for you. I can see why your parents feel welcome in the nursery as well, and I can understand why they are glad that you go there. It is a happy place because you all get on so well and behave brilliantly. Well done to everyone!

I was pleased to see that you happily come into the nursery and that you make good friends there. You are doing well at working and playing. I am glad that you know how to keep safe and healthy. You have lots of fun in the outdoor areas, riding, climbing and making up games together. The grown-ups enjoy being with you and they are very kind. They help you to settle in and get used to new things. They teach you well and look after you. I am pleased that you get a bit of extra help when you need it. You have lots of exciting things to do every day.

The grown-ups are working hard to give you the best start in life and they make sure that the nursery is improving all the time. I have asked them to do two things to help you do even better. First, to make sure that you learn a bit faster about how and why things happen and change in the world around you. I am sure you will enjoy this, because you have a lot of good ideas already and will enjoy talking about them. I have also asked them to check even more carefully that you are making really good progress in all of your areas of learning. Thank you again for helping me with my work. Your nursery is giving you a good start. Keep on enjoying learning and you will have bright futures.

Yours sincerely

Barbara Crane Lead Inspector

**Annex B**

3 October 2007

Dear Children

**Inspection of Ronald Tree Nursery, Kettering NN16 9PH**

Thank you for welcoming me and helping me to find out what makes your nursery such a special place for you. I can see why your parents feel welcome in the nursery as well, and I can understand why they are glad that you go there. It is a happy place because you all get on so well and behave brilliantly. Well done to everyone!

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Thank you again for helping me with my work. Your nursery is giving you a good start. Keep on enjoying learning and you will have bright futures.

Yours sincerely

Barbara Crane  
Lead Inspector