

# Washwood Heath Nursery School & Childrens Centre

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 103132      |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Birmingham  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 323763      |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 12 May 2009 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Joyce Cox   |

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.

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| <b>Type of school</b>                              | Nursery   |
| <b>School category</b>                             | Maintained  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                         | 0–4   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                            | Mixed   |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                              |   |
| School (total)                                     | 170   |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years | 40  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                       | The governing body                                      |
| <b>Chair</b>                                       | Pearl Whiten  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                                 | Valerie Daniel  |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>          | 1 September 2005  |
| <b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>       | Not previously inspected                                |
| <b>School address</b>                              | 201 Sladefield Road<br>Ward End<br>Birmingham<br>B8 2SY |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                            | 0121 464 1810   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                                  | 0121 464 1810   |

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|--------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Age group</b>         | 0–4         |
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the nursery and children's centre and investigated the following issues:

- the success of strategies to further boys' early mathematical and reading and writing development
- the impact of all levels of leadership and management on promoting children's learning, development and achievement
- the partnership with parents and the local community to determine what staff are doing to embrace and include all families.

Evidence was gathered from the nursery's self-evaluation; assessment records; observation of the nursery at work; discussions with staff, parents and governors; and an analysis of parental questionnaires. Other aspects of the nursery's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the nursery's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, are not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This nursery and children's centre provides an extensive range of integrated services, support and day-care facilities for families, carers and children. These include full day care provision from birth to four and part-time nursery provision for children aged three and four. There are stay and play sessions, breakfast and after-school clubs, holiday play schemes, language groups, young parents' groups, a lads and dads club, a baby health clinic, crèches, family support workshops and drop-in sessions.

Most children come from Pakistani backgrounds, although a small number are from other minority ethnic groups as well as White British heritages. A high proportion of children speak English as an additional language, with most being at an early stage of English acquisition. A broadly average number of children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The setting is recognised locally as having outstanding, innovative early years practice and shares its expertise with other settings, including training and guidance on effective learning and development through play.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This outstanding and inspirational nursery and children's centre provides high quality education and care. The headteacher is a superb leader who has the highest aspirations for the children. She works in close partnership with her deputy and together their passion, expertise and dedication permeate and enthuse the whole staff team, who work extremely well together to constantly evaluate and improve the setting. There is a total conviction that the children's well-being and success is integral to the centre's work. Parents greatly value this commitment and wholeheartedly support the centre. They are delighted with the excellent progress their children make; as one parent said, 'The headteacher and staff provide excellent opportunities for children to learn, explore and have fun. My four children have all quickly learnt to speak English and are safe and well cared for, so I have been able to study and gain a childcare qualification.'

A sensitively planned induction programme means that all children now have a very happy and successful start to their education. A strong, active partnership with parents and carers is swiftly established. Parent support workers and the wide variety of parenting classes ensure that parents are familiar with the centre before their child joins. Classes to help parents acquire English, sessions for dads and lads and numerous workshops involving parents, carers and children are just some of the excellent opportunities available. Nevertheless the leadership team are never complacent and correctly feel they could establish even more close links with some parents and carers.

Babies and toddlers in the 0 to 3 provision develop a strong sense of security through close and caring contact with key adults who spend time with them and their families and whom they get to know really well. The all-round development of the youngest children is successfully promoted by activities that are specially planned or adapted to their needs. They can choose what they want to play with, gradually developing longer periods of concentration as they use all their senses both indoors and outdoors in their exciting rooftop space! The homely, nurturing environment and the welcoming, smiling staff ensure that babies and toddlers settle quickly, which reassures parents. Staff are exceptionally skilled at encouraging very young children to communicate. They are also enthusiastic play partners, happily sitting in the tent, exploring lightness and darkness using fascinating optical spheres or singing nursery rhymes. Parents feel valued and active partners. One parent commented, 'Staff have supported me with potty training, speech therapy and all aspects of my child's early development. They are brilliant at supporting working parents through the fantastic before and after school care.'

The nursery is very welcoming, calm and tranquil and has a strong sense of belonging for all communities and absolute respect for a range of different cultures. Children can't wait to come to nursery and love to learn new things. This is because relationships between staff, children and parents are excellent and because a well-planned, stimulating and exciting curriculum supports their learning exceptionally well. The stunning outdoor learning area which provides both challenge and intrigue is freely available at all times and in all seasons. Children love being outside and confidently learn to take risks and explore in a safe, supervised environment. They happily dig, climb up into the loft, weave in and out of the maze and create dens and caves to be fire fighters and super heroes. Boys have been identified as requiring a variety of strategies to further their mathematical and language development. Staff have had considerable success in harnessing boys' physical prowess in meaningful outdoor play. Consequently boys' skills in all areas are developing well. All children quickly learn that exercise and fresh air are very good

for them. They enjoy cooking and gradually understand which foods are healthy. The wholesome and varied lunches and snacks, which are expertly prepared using fresh ingredients, mean that children taste a range of good foods.

Children's personal development and well-being are excellent because adults provide warm physical and emotional care so that children feel very safe and thrive. They behave very well and work and play in harmony. Children work very well with adults and independently. The nursery indoor area is skilfully organised into workshop areas. Through the enticing range of high quality equipment and activities provided using natural materials, the outstanding teaching ensures children are constantly challenged and motivated. Staff constantly promote the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. A teacher dressed as 'Wally Cat' personally welcomes parents and children and hands out certificates for those with sustained attendance. The centre has been successful in reducing the number of absences caused by families taking holidays in term time. Assessment of children's learning and development is excellent so that children needing extra help or more challenge are swiftly identified and provided for by individual or group sessions. Detailed observations of children's interactions with their friends and adults provide staff with an excellent picture of the next steps in children's learning. Colourful photographs and detailed observations are noted in children's learning journeys, which are shared with parents and provide an excellent account of children's early learning.

On entry, children are performing at considerably lower levels than those typically expected. All groups of children benefit from consistently high quality teaching which is based on detailed research into the ways young children learn best. Hence children's achievement is excellent and when they leave the nursery they are generally working well within the levels expected for children of this age. Children attain above the expected levels in their creative development as a result of the high calibre support of a talented artist in residence. Those children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make excellent progress relative to their starting points and capabilities. Staff sensitively and gently encourage all children to communicate using gestures and sign language if necessary. An excellent team of multi-linguists are highly effective in supporting and extending a range of Asian languages. A systematic and rigorous approach to safeguarding protects children and reassures parents. Adults are vigilant in enabling children to learn how to keep themselves safe. Excellent links with a wide range of agencies and local schools and centres provide high levels of support for children and their parents.

The promotion of community cohesion is excellent. The centre values and respects its linguistic and cultural diversity. Home languages are respected and celebrated and used to support children's learning and play. Excellent relationships have been established with the local community and there is a clear sense of raising aspirations with regard to economic well-being and educational achievement for both children and parents. An exciting, vibrant autumn carnival celebrating African, Caribbean, British, Muslim and Hindu cultures reflects the outstanding community cohesion, the highlight of which was the headteacher's brilliant rendition of Bob Marley's 'Don't worry about a thing!'

Self-evaluation is excellent and senior leaders are always looking to identify where improvements can be made, and the capacity to carry improvements through is outstanding. Governance has improved considerably as governors are much more involved in the setting and have taken the lead in formulating an accessibility plan. This innovative nursery and children's centre is highly regarded in the Washwood Heath area and makes an outstanding difference to the lives of numerous children and families.

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

- Extend the strong links with parents even further so that they play a full part in their children's learning and development.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### Overall effectiveness

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>       | 1   |
| 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   | 1   |

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children?</b>                          | 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 | 1 |

### The quality of provision

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?</b> | 1 |
| <b>How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?</b>  | 1 |



## Leadership and management

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?</b>   | 1   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1   |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 1   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 1   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated   | 1   |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?   | 1   |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 1   |
| 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**

13 May 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Washwood Heath Nursery and Children's Centre, Birmingham B8 2SY

Thank you for the great day we spent at your nursery. We really enjoyed seeing all the exciting things you do. I was particularly impressed at how brilliant you all are at working and playing so happily together. We agree with your mums and dads that you go to an outstanding nursery.

These are some of the things that we think are excellent.

- You are very good at working hard, helping each other and listening to your teachers, and you do well in all your activities.
- The grown-ups take really good care of you; they are very good teachers and make your learning interesting and fun.
- Babies and toddlers have a great time in their rooms and have fantastic toys and equipment and smiley adults to play with.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are very clever about running the nursery and children's centre and make sure you all have a really good time and do well.
- If any of you needs extra help with learning or speaking English you are always given it.
- Like you, we think the outdoor and rooftop areas are brilliant places to explore and have fun.
- You love learning new things and are very good at sharing nicely, taking turns, and being kind to each other. The headteacher and staff have many excellent ideas to make the nursery even better. We agree with their ideas and also think it would be good if they make sure your mums and dads help you as much as they can with your learning. We had a lovely day at your nursery and really enjoyed meeting you all and all the staff.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Joyce Cox

Lead inspector