

# Colleges Nursery and Family Centre

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110597
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	325176
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Anna Coyle

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2-4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	80
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Timothy Anderson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Helen Snow
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 March 2006
<b>School address</b>	Campkin Road Cambridge CB4 2LD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01223712168
<b>Fax number</b>	01223712168

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## Introduction

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

- provision for the higher attainers
- the procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching
- the roles of the curriculum leader and the coordinator for special educational needs.

The inspector gathered evidence from observations of learning activities, samples of children's work and photographs of them at play, discussions with children, staff and governors, and an analysis of the parents' questionnaires. The main documents used by the school in monitoring and strategic planning were also examined to ascertain the quality of leadership and management in the school. 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 provided in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Colleges Nursery and Family Centre is situated on the northern side of Cambridge in the middle of several large estates of social housing. Most children are White British, but there is also a high proportion of children from minority ethnic backgrounds, some of whom learn English as an additional language. The main languages spoken at home are Bengali, Spanish and French. A significant proportion of children find learning difficult; their specific needs include visual and hearing impairment, speech and language difficulties and autism. The school was recognised as a Health Promoting School in 2005 and it has the ICT Mark for its work in information and communication technology. The nursery provides 24 day care places for children from the age of 2 years. This was set up in September 2006 and is run by the governing body. The centre also provides wrap around care sessions from 08.00 to 18.00.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an excellent Nursery and Day Care Centre. It provides an outstanding start to children's education and cares for them exceedingly well in a happy, welcoming and friendly atmosphere in which parents are highly valued as partners in their children's learning.

Children make excellent progress and their achievement is outstanding in this positive, colourful and vibrant environment. They thoroughly enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their good attendance levels. When they first start in the day care centre, known as 'The Daisy Room', children's skills and experiences are broadly similar to those expected for their age, although their skills in aspects of communication and using numbers are less well developed than in other areas of learning. As a result of well-established links between the day care staff, the nursery teachers and the teaching assistants, children quickly settle into daily routines and make rapid progress in this calm and purposeful setting. Children's excellent personal development and well-being are extremely well supported by a strong focus on promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, the youngest children love breakfast and teatime activities at the beginning and end of the day where they can socialise with others and eat in a 'family' atmosphere. Older children in the Nursery have an excellent understanding of keeping healthy and the importance of eating a balanced diet. Their table manners are outstanding. They learn how to hold a knife and fork correctly and share nourishing food such as roast chicken, vegetables and fresh fruit. Children know how to keep safe and readily turn to adults for help when needed. They are exceedingly well motivated, happy and keen to learn. Children develop good communication skills and confidently ask questions, share their ideas and come up with possible solutions to problems. They are not afraid to make mistakes because they know that adults and other children will appreciate their efforts and help them find the answer. Their behaviour is exemplary and relationships between all members of the school community are outstanding.

Learning and development are excellent. Children's excellent learning habits are expertly promoted through first-class teaching. The staff work very closely together as an outstanding team, focusing closely on children's individual needs. They have an excellent understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and of how young children learn. Procedures for checking and tracking children's progress are highly developed and the information gathered is promptly used to target individual support. For example, information is gathered together and used very effectively in children's 'special books' and 'learning journeys' as well as in photographic evidence of children at work and at play on the plasma screen. As a result of this, staff accurately plan the next steps in children's learning, although the school recognises that this can be further improved by including more precise information in teachers' written planning about how staff will challenge the higher attainers. Nevertheless, teachers' planning takes good account of children's different starting points, and teaching assistants give valuable support to children who are vulnerable or who require additional support to help them learn in areas such as the 'studio'. This means that children are given an excellent range of opportunities across all the areas of learning, and there is an outstanding balance between adult-led and free-choice activities. All adults make skilled use of questioning to draw out children's previous knowledge and understanding of the world around them, and help them adapt and extend their skills in new situations. Learning resources are of very high quality and readily available. Full use is made of the well equipped outdoor area which contains the much loved 'Little House on the Hill' and plenty of exciting things to do to increase their creative and physical skills, such

as dressing up, painting, riding wheeled toys, and climbing and swinging. Children also have regular opportunities to take part in exciting visits to the local 'Forest School'. These visits are greatly enjoyed by the children and staff, and much appreciated by parents. They provide the children with excellent imaginative opportunities to help them develop their knowledge of the natural world and increase their understanding of how to stay safe but have fun and wonderful enjoyment whilst exploring the forest.

The arrangements for promoting children's welfare are outstanding. Safeguarding procedures meet the current requirements and all staff are very familiar with child protection procedures and first aid arrangements. Links with outside agencies and other local nurseries are excellent. The strong focus on fostering and nurturing children is firmly rooted in its emphasis on the treating every child as a unique individual. It provides full equality of opportunity for all, and this is the basis of its excellent provision for ensuring children's welfare. As a result, children thrive and are extremely well-prepared for the next stage of their education. Children for whom English is an additional language make excellent progress because they are well integrated into activities and given careful guidance and support to help them learn a new language.

Leadership and management are outstanding and the headteacher provides excellent direction. Her vision is highly focused on children achieving their very best. She works together very closely with the day care manager and senior staff. All adults work as a highly effective and excellent team, with individual responsibilities clearly defined and understood by all. The roles of the curriculum leader and special needs coordinator are well developed and excellent systems are firmly in place for them to oversee the school's provision. They are highly focused on maintaining and further improving children's learning and progress, although staff are not fully involved in monitoring the quality of teaching. Self-evaluation is thorough and is successfully driving plans for development. As a result, targets and priorities are highly accurate and the school has an excellent capacity for further improvement. The governing body diligently holds the school to account and directly evaluates the impact of its spending decisions on the needs of the children. It is currently reviewing its strong provision for promoting community cohesion. This aspect has many strengths, particularly the inclusiveness of the school and its outstanding links with the local community. The school makes excellent use of its staff and resources, with governors' expertise and experience well deployed. Since the previous inspection, the school has focused successfully on assessing children's progress and promoting their communication and calculation skills. This is particularly evident when children are encouraged to share ideas during story sessions and small group times. In their responses to the inspection questionnaire, parents expressed a very high degree of satisfaction. Parents say they are really pleased with their children's progress and are enthusiastic about the school. They say they particularly enjoy the family disco, the May Fayre and regular meetings with 'very warm, caring staff'. Their comments include, 'The special books give us so much pleasure and reassurance' and, 'My child adores Nursery and Daisy Room and is always keen to go each morning'. The inspector agrees with parents that this is indeed, in their words, a 'fantastic' school.

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

- Strengthen teaching and leadership by: - including clear references in teachers' written plans to how higher attaining children will be challenged, and involving staff in monitoring the quality of teaching.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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**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	2
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	1
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**

26 March 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Colleges Nursery School and Family Centre, Cambridge, CB4 2LD

Thank you for being so friendly when I came to visit you in your school, and for talking to me and showing me some of the exciting things you do. This letter is to let you know what I found out.

- You go to an outstanding Nursery and Day Care Centre where all the adults take care of you extremely well and make sure that you are safe.
- You love coming to school and your behaviour is excellent.
- You enjoy all the things you do at Nursery and in the Daisy Room.
- You make outstanding progress in your learning.
- The teaching is outstanding.
- Classrooms are clean, bright, colourful places to learn with lots of excellent displays on the walls and on the plasma screen.
- You have plenty of exciting opportunities to take part in creative and physical activities, such as in your excellent visits to the 'Forest School'.
- The headteacher is doing an outstanding job of leading and managing the school.

We have asked your school to look at how they can make things even better by:

asking the teachers to write down more about their ideas for helping you to learn and checking that everything is as good as it could be.

You can help by continuing to enjoy learning and being very good children.

Best wishes

Dr Anna Coyle

Lead inspector