

Flagg Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112481
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	325612
Inspection date	15 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Joanne Harvey

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2-5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	39
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Marian French
Headteacher	Mrs Lorraine Sinclair-Evans
Date of previous school inspection	11 May 2006
School address	Main Road Flagg Buxton Derbyshire SK17 9QT
Telephone number	01298 85208
Fax number	01298 85208

Age group	2-5
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated:

- the success of measures taken by the school to improve the progress children make in their communication, language and literacy skills.
- whether the systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school involve all staff and are having a good or better impact on outcomes for children.
- whether governors play their full part in setting the strategic direction of the school, offering support and challenge and effectively monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

The inspectors gathered evidence from records of children's progress, observations of lessons and other activities, examples of children's work, discussions with children, staff and governors, and discussions and questionnaires from parents. The main documents used by the school in its monitoring were examined. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors 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 where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a very small nursery school serving several isolated rural villages in North West Derbyshire. These are predominantly farming communities but the nursery also serves families who travel a greater distance to attend. The area is broadly average in terms of socio-economic features but includes a very wide range. All children are of White British heritage. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is higher than the national average.

The governing body also manages extended provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This includes a breakfast club, a lunch time 'Flagg Tractor Club' and 'Little Links' childcare for children aged two to under five. This allows families the flexibility to extend their child's nursery session to a day within the setting. These are all included in this report. The extended provision shares all of the nursery's facilities which include one large and one smaller classroom linked by a large reception area, a large enclosed veranda and a secure and extensive outdoor area.

The nursery signposts children to a nearby after-school club and children from the nursery can access a 0-3 toddler group in an adjacent building, but these are not managed by the governing body of the school and are therefore reported on separately.

The nursery has achieved a Healthy Schools Award and a Quality Mark for Early Years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Flagg Nursery School makes outstanding provision for children's welfare and for their learning and development. As a result, children's achievement and their personal development are outstanding. Children make exceptional progress whatever their starting points so that by the time they leave the Nursery, they often exceed the levels of knowledge and skills expected of them in all areas of their learning. Flagg Nursery was judged to be good at the time of the last inspection and has continued to go from strength to strength since then. Exceptional leadership and management, a highly committed staff team and strong partnerships with governors and parents have all ensured that the quality of the integrated and extended childcare provided in the Nursery is high.

Children enter the Nursery with a broad range of levels of knowledge and skills though aspects of their communication, language and literacy skills are often lower than other areas. By the time they leave the Nursery, the levels children reach are consistently above those expected, particularly so in their personal, social and emotional development, their physical abilities, and their knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative development. This represents much exceptional progress. Progress is at least good in most areas of communication, language and literacy and in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. Staff are quick to identify areas where progress may be relatively slower and to take action to address this. For example, progress in children's abilities to link sounds to letters is quickening because of the introduction of more rigour in the teaching of the sounds which letters make. The high level of expertise and commitment of staff ensure that children with a special educational need or a disability also make exceptional progress toward their personal targets.

Children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development, is outstanding. Early on, children are taught to understand their feelings and to show respect. Adults are excellent role models in the high expectations they have for the children in their care. As a result, children develop a clear understanding of right and wrong and their behaviour is exemplary. Hence, aspects such as inclusion and equality within the setting are second nature to all. Children develop a remarkable understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and safe. For example, they can talk about dangers on the road and use tools and move around the setting extremely responsibly. They love to be active and to eat the healthy snacks provided. They demonstrate their love of physical activity through their obvious joy when using the outdoor facilities. Children's enthusiasm and exceptional levels of enjoyment are due in no small part to the inspirational learning opportunities that they are offered, both indoors and outdoors. This is also reflected in the high levels of attendance.

Children make a good contribution to the community and have an excellent input into the local neighbourhood. They are at the forefront of any activity or celebration which takes place within the local community. The way children look after the resources in the setting is admirable though leaders are looking to develop further the opportunities for children to choose, access and return resources independently to complete tasks which may have been originally initiated by an adult. Children cooperate extremely well. These excellent personal skills and strong academic development prepare children extremely well for their future lives.

Adults promote children's learning exceptionally well. Teaching and learning are never less than good and very often outstanding. Trusting relationships encourage children to be confident and secure and to develop the tenacity to see things through. Adults demonstrate an exceptional

understanding of how young children develop and of the framework for learning. As a result, they respond instantly to opportunities whilst children are at play, to further extend their learning, for example, by asking open and challenging questions. Most are also highly skilled at knowing when to stand back and let children experiment and put into practice what they have learned. The excellent management of the complex staff team and the well-ordered environment helps ensure that sessions flow well. Planning is thorough and is based on the detailed knowledge of children's needs, progress and interests. Staff regularly make and share their observations of children. These are compiled into photographic journals and work profiles which are shared with parents. Adults are extremely skilled in ensuring the needs of everyone, no matter how severe or complex, are met.

Children are offered an outstanding curriculum. Themed topics are extremely well organised and planned and a delightful learning environment has been created, both indoors and outdoors. These result in children's exceptional enjoyment and the high level of appreciation expressed by parents and carers. The use of information and communication technology is well embedded into all areas of the curriculum and supports learning and engagement extremely well. Activities are play based and planned to enable children to explore and experiment, with the right balance of adult led and child-initiated opportunities. The outdoor area is well thought out and includes natural and man-made environments and places where children can be active or quiet. However, the curriculum is not restricted to the limits of the secure play area but extends to the excellent use of the surrounding environment.

Adults work together to ensure children's welfare is promoted outstandingly well. Carefully devised safety routines are rigorously applied to ensure that throughout the setting, provision for welfare is of the highest quality and safeguarding procedures meet requirements. An excellent focus on inclusion involves the use of able staff to provide outstandingly well for children who find learning more difficult or who may have more severe and complex needs. Individualised programmes are carefully taught, ensuring that these children make outstanding progress. The progress of all children is closely monitored and evaluated. Each individual child is very well known and those who are at risk are identified swiftly and no-one slips through the net. Close and trusting relationships and good communication between adults, children, and their families ensure the active involvement of parents and carers. There is a secure, family-like atmosphere and children are confident to approach any adult in the setting with any worries.

The headteacher plays an exemplary part in giving a clear strategic steer and this underpins the shared ethos and high expectations held by all. There is a shared passion for providing high quality early years education and childcare provision which is backed by professional development opportunities which help to keep standards high. Expertise is shared so that staff are able to fulfil a range of roles. Self-evaluation is accurate and leads to appropriate plans for improvement and challenging and sometimes aspirational targets being set and met. This gives confidence that the setting has outstanding capacity to continue to improve. It is not surprising that parents value the work of the setting highly. Leaders have carefully audited and evaluated the contribution made to promoting community cohesion as good. They have quite rightly identified that within the setting and the local community it is outstanding. The next step is to carry out their plans to develop links with other contrasting settings elsewhere in the UK and overseas in order to extend their contribution further. Governance has continued to develop well since the last inspection. Governors offer a good deal of practical support and challenge to the headteacher. They are looking forward to further developing their role in monitoring and evaluating the school's work.

The overwhelmingly positive view of the majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire was summed up by one who volunteered: 'The school totally fulfils all my children's needs and mine. Their characters have blossomed thanks to the love and care at school, and fun, with excellent academic progress.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to develop opportunities for children to help others beyond the local community and to widen the contribution they make to promoting community cohesion.

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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 is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	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

How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
The standards[1] reached by learners	1
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

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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
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?	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?	2
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**

16 June 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Flagg Nursery School, Buxton, SK17 9QT.

Thank you for being so nice to us when we came to visit you and for helping us to find out so much about your Nursery. It was wonderful to see you all playing so happily and nicely together. It was also good to see that you work very hard indeed and that you have so much fun doing so.

I am writing to you to tell you what we found out. We agree with you and your parents that your Nursery is wonderful! We have judged it to be outstanding in just about every way. That is because Mrs Sinclair-Evans and everyone who works at Flagg Nursery and in the childcare looks after you so very carefully and helps to make sure you are happy, safe and very well looked after. You learn to be very good at doing lots of things for yourselves and we saw this as you helped yourselves to drinks and snacks. You also learn to be kind and to look after each other and to behave extremely well. You learn about how to keep healthy and safe, especially in your wonderful outdoor area. You do very well at Nursery and often much better than children in most Nursery schools. That is because the adults all keep a very close eye on how well you are doing. They are brilliant at planning exciting things for each of you to do which will help you all to keep doing as well as you can. Mrs Sinclair-Evans, the governors and everyone at the Nursery are always looking for ways to make it even better for you. We agree with them that the next thing to do is to find more ways to help people who live in other parts of the country and around the world.

We are sure that Mrs Sinclair-Evans and all the adults will carry on working hard to do their best for you. You have an important job to do too by listening carefully and joining in and trying your best with everything at Nursery.

We would like to wish you good luck and happiness for the future.

Joanne Harvey

Lead inspector