

# Charlotte Nursery and Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112575
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	325636
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Linda Killman HMI

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	353
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Andrea Varley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Pam Jordan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 March 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Trinity Close Ilkeston Derbyshire DE7 8LQ

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<b>Age group</b>	3–7
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	325636

**Telephone number**  
**Fax number**

01159320970  
01159309622

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger infant school than most others nationally. While pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds, very few have free school meals. Almost all pupils are White British. A small minority of pupils speak a language other than English at home. On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, most children meet national expectations in all areas of learning. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The majority of pupils remain at the school throughout Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The school has achieved the Silver Eco School and Healthy Schools status and School Sport accreditation.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Pupils thrive at this happy and inclusive school because of the good quality education and care it provides. The smiles on pupils' faces and the spring in their step as they arrive at school are indicative of their enjoyment in learning. They develop as confident, independent learners, making secure relationships with staff who work in close partnership with their parents to support learning. Most parents are very complimentary about all that the school provides. Comments such as 'My children love coming to this school' and 'Both my children have made fantastic progress' illustrate their high regard for it.

The school has improved significantly since its last inspection in 2006. Boys and the most able learners are now achieving well, good academic guidance ensures that pupils know how to improve their work and governors are fulfilling their roles efficiently. Leadership and management are demonstrably effective. The headteacher knows how young children learn best and is effective in putting systems in place to ensure that they achieve well. Subject and year leaders contribute towards continuous improvement but their skills in monitoring and evaluation do not yet match the good quality of those modelled by the headteacher and deputy. Staff keep a watchful eye on how well pupils are performing throughout the year and take swift restorative action if they fall behind. Standards are steadily rising. They are above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics and compare favourably with similar schools. Nonetheless, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not achieving as well as they should. This is because their individual targets and the criteria for success are set with insufficient precision.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The best teaching generates high interest levels for pupils through good quality practical experiences and use of exciting resources that capture pupils' interest. Learning is exciting, so pupils work hard and make good progress. The pupils benefit from good quality support enabling them to work in smaller ability groups skilfully guided by a teacher or a teaching assistant.

There is much for pupils to look forward to at school. The curriculum is good and meets all statutory requirements. Teachers are making links between subjects and plan activities that are meaningful, appropriate and relevant to pupils' life experiences, making learning enjoyable. By the time they are ready to transfer to the next school, most pupils have developed secure skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) to support them in the future. The curriculum advances pupils' personal development and well-being to a good level. Pupils know how to live a healthy lifestyle and how to keep themselves safe. An emphasis on personal, health, and social education promote pupils' impressive behaviour and well-developed social skills.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery class with attainment that is close to that expected for their age. They make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, counting skills and reading. In other areas of learning progress is satisfactory. In Reception, children make good progress in all areas of learning. Attainment has risen over the past three years. Whereas in 2007 attainment was broadly as expected, in 2008 outcomes exceeded expectations. Daily teaching of letter sounds (phonics) contributes to children's good progress in literacy. The very

caring ethos in the EYFS helps children to feel safe. Welfare arrangements are good. Children have good attitudes to learning and sustain their interest for considerable lengths of time on the majority of tasks. The Nursery curriculum has improved over the last year and there is now a good balance between adult-led activities and those chosen by the children, so that they start to become good independent learners. Staff plan effectively, so that children have exciting activities both inside and outside to motivate them to learn. In Reception classes the curriculum covers most of the areas of learning well and adult-led activities are linked effectively to the needs and abilities of the children. However, the opportunities for child-initiated activities that develop autonomy and a disposition to learn, and the use of the outside space to extend all areas of learning are underdeveloped. Leadership of EYFS is satisfactory and improving. The EYFS leader is working closely with local authority early years advisers to achieve greater consistency across Nursery and Reception classes.

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

- Achieve greater consistency across the EYFS in the provision of well-planned indoor and outdoor experiences in the six areas of learning to promote spontaneous learning and play.
- Sharpen assessment and target setting systems for pupils with special learning needs, so that they make good progress towards clearly defined goals.
- Develop the skills of subject and year leaders in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The rate at which most pupils make progress exceeds national expectations. Good teaching and pupils' positive dispositions and attitudes contribute to their good achievement. Standards are historically above average. The proportion of Year 2 pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in reading and writing is above national and local authority averages. The school's latest assessment information indicates that this year's cohort is on track to reach the school's challenging targets for 2009. Written work seen in pupils' books confirms this. The pupils enjoy writing. A Year 1 pupil remarked as she proudly showed her work, 'My writing is getting really good, I reckon'. In all subjects in 2008, boys matched the girls' good attainment whereas nationally, at this stage, girls do better than the boys do. This is because teachers are mindful in lessons to utilise a range of approaches and resources that boys and girls find exciting.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are friendly, forthcoming and sociable. They are polite and well mannered, for example when talking with adults during the lunch break. Their behaviour is consistently good in lessons and at play. The pupils know right from wrong and have high expectations for how they should treat each other. Bullying and racist incidents are extremely rare; nonetheless, the school treats them seriously. While spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school is promoting cultural awareness through religious education, assemblies and links with two schools in Romania to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of different faiths, customs and cultures. In keeping with their good knowledge of healthy lifestyles, pupils enjoy snacks of fruit, drink plenty of water and participate enthusiastically in 'Wake up and Shake up' when they exercise to music every morning. Pupils show a good understanding of what they should do to keep themselves safe

and free from harm. The pupils make a valuable contribution to the school community and beyond, for example in becoming school councillors or promoting the school's eco status by diligently recycling waste. Their skills for the future are developing well, especially in reading and in writing in different styles and for different purposes.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good teaching, securely planned with regard to pupils' prior learning, leads to pupils making good progress. Teachers plan activities with pupils' abilities and interests in mind so that their interest level is high and learning is purposeful. However, in some lessons, the starting point for the main activity is the same for everyone. Pupils work productively but sometimes there are missed opportunities to provide an alternative task for those who pick up learning quickly and are ready to stride ahead.

Pupils who need additional help are benefiting from professional training undertaken by all teaching assistants that has helped them to sharpen their skills. The pupils enjoy the brisk pace of lessons and the good quality resources that support their learning. Teachers use the electronic whiteboards very effectively. Film clips, games and images from the internet reinforce the main teaching points. Prompts and useful tips on display in the classrooms also support learning. All pupils receive regular verbal feedback during lessons that guides them towards achieving the learning objective. However, the quality of marking varies across subjects and classes.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school places a high emphasis on pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. This helps them to behave well and make good progress in personal development. The good programme has helped the school to achieve Healthy School and silver Eco-awards. Raising attainment and progress in reading and writing have been central to curriculum improvement over the past year. For example, the daily sessions of linking sounds and letters and groups of letters are helping to improve pupils' reading and spelling skills more rapidly than previously. Similar development in mathematics is planned for next year. The development of a more creative curriculum is beginning to encourage better progress in all subjects. Teachers' planning links subjects effectively, so that learning is more exciting and relevant for the pupils. There is a good use of literacy skills to support other subjects. Teachers use ICT well in many subjects and this is increasing pupils' motivation and progress. The school provides a good range of clubs, such as sports clubs, science and ICT. Take up for the many clubs that run during the week is high. Visits and visitors effectively enrich the curriculum. For example, local business-people lead activities for the Young Enterprise Scheme, when pupils learn about the world of work.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care is a considerable strength of the school. Relationships are good and pupils trust the adults. Consequently, pupils feel safe and valued and try hard to please. There is satisfactory provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so that they make satisfactory progress. Individual education programmes are in place for these pupils but targets are not yet

sharp enough for staff and pupils to have clear guidelines for improvement. The school fosters good links with outside agencies and seeks advice on how to best support vulnerable pupils and those whose home language is not English. Attendance, though satisfactory, has been a recurrent problem. The school identifies persistent absentees and works well with the Educational Welfare Officer and Social Services to encourage better attendance. The school promotes, celebrates and rewards those who attend regularly or improve their attendance. Assessment procedures are thorough and the school uses this information well to target support towards those who are falling behind. Pupils are beginning to evaluate their progress in lessons against the 'steps to success' which promotes independent learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy, provides a strong steer towards continuous improvement. They know how young children learn best, and are resolute in their principle that every child matters and will achieve highly. Effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the schools' work are in place so that staff and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Year and subject leaders are beginning to develop skills in monitoring and evaluating the school's work but currently lack the confidence to make incisive judgements. Staff know that they are accountable for raising achievement and standards and work productively as a team to achieve this. Leadership and management at all levels contribute to the school's development planning. Governance is good because governors undertake training to help them to fulfil their role effectively. They achieve an appropriate balance of support and challenge and accurately evaluate the effectiveness of policies and schemes. For example, inspectors agree with the governing body's recent evaluation that the school is effective in promoting community cohesion. This is a school where the leadership and management are successful in moving it forward and provide good capacity to sustain improvement.



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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	2

## 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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

30 January 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Charlotte Nursery and Infant School, Ilkeston DE7 8LQ

You may remember that, recently, three inspectors came to your school to see how well you are learning. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you at work and at play. We were impressed by your good manners and politeness and we would like to say a huge thank you for being so friendly and telling us all about your school. Yours is a good school and this is why:

- you behave very well in lessons and when playing outside. You treat one another kindly and think carefully about how you should treat others.
- you know how to stay safe and be healthy
- your teachers do a good job making sure that you learn as much as you can as fast as you are able. They check to make sure that you are reaching your targets
- you and your parents say that you enjoy school and we agree
- your headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors are keen for you to do well at school. They make regular checks to make sure that you all improve.

To make the school even better we have asked the staff and governors to:

- give the Nursery and Reception classes even more interesting activities to choose from, especially when they play outside
- give those of you who find learning more difficult clearer targets to aim for
- help staff who are responsible for year groups and subjects to check that teaching and learning is as good as it can be.

Rightly, you and your parents think highly of your school. We know that you are happy, confident learners and we hope that you will always enjoy school as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely

Linda Killman

Her Majesty's Inspector