

Lenthall Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112696
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	325666
Inspection date	15 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Roderick Passant

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.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	116
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Stephen Thompson
Headteacher	Mrs Lynda Wallace
Date of previous school inspection	27 April 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Marsh Avenue Dronfield Derbyshire S18 2HB
Telephone number	01246 414569
Fax number	01246 419067

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and the Early Years Foundation Stage and investigated the following issues:

- current standards and progress
- pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- attendance.

Evidence was drawn from the school's self-evaluation, lesson observations, school documentation, discussions with the headteacher and members of staff, three members of the governing body including the chair of governors, pupils and the analysis of parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average. Almost all pupils are White British. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational needs, is well below average. In the school's Early Years Foundation Stage, 52 children attend part time in the Nursery. Although children are at very different stages of development when they join the Nursery, they generally have the knowledge understanding and skills typical for their age group. The school has gained awards for Basic skills, Healthy Schools, Artsmark, Activemark, and Silver and Bronze Eco Awards. Lenthall Pre-Nursery and Lenthall Children's Club operate in the school buildings but are privately run and subject to separate inspections. In addition, a parent and child group meet weekly.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

'The child comes first', a 'fantastic school', a 'welcoming, warm family atmosphere' where 'children are nurtured and valued for who they are' were typical comments received by inspectors, illustrating the overwhelming support of parents for the school. A Year 1 pupil wrote to the inspectors to say that 'the school is always sparkly clean' and was special to the children 'because it has good toys and very special teachers... because they always do nice things'. The school has deep roots in the local community and the respect of parents who value the extended care opportunities, the 'brilliant' staff, 'inspirational leadership' of the headteacher and the 'excellent opportunities for parent and teacher contact', which encourages the 'ethos of working together' to ensure the 'child's best interests are accounted for in a consistent and compatible way'. These views accurately sum up some of the many strengths of the school.

At the time of the inspection, the school was staging the final rehearsals for the school's performance of 'Sleeping Beauty' and pupils' singing permeated the building. Staff and governors are very clear why the leavers' performance and Christmas concerts are significant events in fostering pupils' confidence and such an important feature of school life. They are typical of the many activities where pupils gain the sense of success that plays so important a part in the development of their self-confidence and academic learning. The trips, visitors and clubs all add significant further enrichment. A Year 2 pupil described their prowess in the football by saying, 'We are indestructible, because we are very skilled.'

The school was described as outstanding in the last inspection. It has continued to improve since then. In this school, the judgement of outstanding is not a ceiling on improvement. The headteacher's leadership continues to be outstanding. She knows all the pupils exceptionally well and there is a sustained focus on them as individuals, the progress that they are making and how best to support or challenge them. This has created a highly inclusive school ethos in which all pupils, including those with learning difficulties do exceptionally well. The excellent leadership and management at all levels continuously strive to ensure that pupils have the best educational experience possible. Governance is excellent; it is highly supportive of the school but prepared to challenge and debate decisions. The school's self-evaluation is extremely accurate and this is translated into a clear development plan although the intended impact on pupils' learning of the various initiatives lack precision. The depth of leadership skills is remarkable and the capacity to achieve further improvements is outstanding.

Pupils make exceptional progress over their time in the school. There is little difference in boys' and girls' achievement by Year 2. Standards in reading, writing, mathematics are exceptionally high. This is not achieved because the curriculum is rich and vibrant. It captures pupils' interests, fosters their outstanding enjoyment and provides a range of contexts in which they investigate, work together, create, apply their skills and demonstrate high standards across all subjects. Teaching is excellent because all staff are highly skilled and classrooms extremely well managed. Like so many things in the school, they make it look so easy because of the depth and clarity of their planning. Learning is underpinned by their excellent relationships with the pupils and teachers' high expectations. Work is clearly targeted to the range of abilities and there is very strong teamwork so that teaching assistants are very effective. Pupils' progress is tracked very carefully and used to identify early those pupils who require additional support. Targets are extremely challenging. Teamwork across the school is very strong because the contribution of everyone is valued. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are robust. All staff are extremely committed to the pupils so that the care, guidance and support pupils get across the

school is outstanding. There is strong and effective partnership with parents established early in the pupil's life in the school so that issues are 'nipped in the bud' early. There are highly effective links with specialist agencies to support individual pupils.

The improvement in the curriculum has led to further improvements in pupils' personal development. This is now outstanding. Pupils have a very clear understanding of what goes to make up a healthy lifestyle, and understand how to keep themselves safe. They take their various roles and responsibilities extremely seriously through, for example, their roles as eco-warriors, school council members and playground buddies, and make an excellent contribution to the school community through their very positive and supportive attitudes. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The school fosters their self-esteem consistently and extremely well so that they feel highly valued. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and have many opportunities to work in different groups and teams. They demonstrate their maturity in discussion, for example, in the way they listen to and build on each other's ideas. Pupils have a good understanding of other faiths, and enjoy learning about other countries. The governors have established a sub-committee which has audited the impact of the school's work in promoting community cohesion. It plans to draw up an action plan to extend the opportunities for pupils to meet with other pupils from different backgrounds. Pupils behave extremely well. The school is a very friendly place and they feel very safe and secure as a result. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in the fact that attendance is above average. The school is preparing pupils extremely well for the next steps in their education.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Achievement and progress in the Nursery and Reception classes are excellent. By the end of the Reception Year, all children reach the goals they are expected to reach in all areas of learning and over half exceed them. All adults put great emphasis on building the children's independence and self-esteem and so they are all confident learners by the time they join Year 1. The children's personal and emotional development is excellent, with almost half of boys and over three quarters of girls exceeding the expected goals. The children make extremely good progress in reading, writing and numeracy skills in the Reception class due to the well-structured curriculum that builds learning systematically and which gets them off to a very good start when they move to Year 1. Leadership and management are excellent. Adults work extremely well together to plan exciting learning experiences that enable the children to learn many new skills and pieces of knowledge in the same activity. For example, children were engaged in making kebabs which had involved them in shopping for ingredients in role play, working out the cost of various ingredients such as three mushrooms at a penny each, making decisions, reinforcing health routines and writing their names on labels. Adults' use of the school's comprehensive assessment information is impressive. Incidental observations carried out by adults and parents and other more focused observations are used to build a full picture of each child's achievement and progress. In response, adults adjust the content of the curriculum and level of learning and address any gaps in learning. Excellent induction and welcome meetings, and the ability to bring their children into classrooms every day encourage parents to be full partners in their children's education from the very start.

What the school should do to improve further

- Define the success criteria in the school improvement plan with greater precision so that it is very clear when the initiative has been successful.

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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?	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

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners 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

¹Grade 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

How good are 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	2
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	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**

16 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lenthall Infant and Nursery School, Dronfield, S18 2HB

Thank you for making my colleague and me so welcome in your school. I was very impressed with your production and I hope it went well when you performed to your parents. My particular thanks to those pupils who gave up some of their lunchtime to talk to us.

You attend an outstanding school. We agree with you that teachers and other adults are very kind and they provide very interesting lessons so that you make extremely good progress. They also care a very great deal about you and keep a very close eye on your progress. This means that you do really well in your reading, writing and mathematics but also in other subjects too. Your behaviour is outstanding and you all take your roles and responsibilities very seriously. I would not want to drop any litter in your school! The eco-warriors would be after me very quickly!

The school is also helping you to grow up as young people extremely well. It is a very friendly school and you all know how to take care of yourselves and the importance of exercise and healthy eating. What is really exciting to see is how enthusiastic you are about your work and how much you enjoy school. Your headteacher is exceptional in her leadership of the school. She constantly wants it to improve so that you get the very best opportunities. She and the staff draw up a plan which lists the improvements they want to make. We have suggested that she make it very clear in the plan how the school will know when they have been successful. This is very important in this school because all adults work so hard that it is important that they know when they have finished something so they can give themselves a pat on the back.

The school has improved a great deal since it was last inspected and you have all played a part in that. With your continued help, the school will go on improving.

All good wishes for your future school careers

Roderick Passant

Lead inspector