

# Derby St Chad's CofE (VC) Nursery and Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112873
<b>Local Authority</b>	City of Derby
<b>Inspection number</b>	325707
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Roger Brown

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	157
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>	Rev Philip Crathorne
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Maxine Bull
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 January 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>	Gordon Road Derby Derbyshire DE23 6WR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 345997

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<b>Age group</b>	3–7
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 March 2009
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**Fax number**

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

The smaller than average sized school serves an inner city area of Derby. Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the term after their third birthday. Over 90% of the children start school with little or no English, and their level of attainment when they enter is well below that expected for their age. A higher proportion than the national average are entitled to free school meals and the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much higher than that normally found. Currently, children speaking 14 different languages attend the school. The majority of children are of Asian heritage. During the past year, the turnover of children has risen rapidly as groups from different backgrounds and circumstances come and live in the area the school serves, then many move on. A third of the current Year 2 are new to the school this year.

A breakfast club, managed by the governing body, operates three days a week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, for a maximum of 25 children.

## 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 school. There has been strong progress since the last inspection and many aspects of its work are now outstanding. The quiet, but visionary leadership of the headteacher has forged a staff team committed to the education and welfare of the children in their care. Standards have been steadily rising. This is as a result of a rigorous monitoring and analysis process developed by the staff. Leadership and management have improved since the last inspection and are now outstanding at all levels. The actions taken by the staff to meet the many challenges and bring about improvement are innovative and successful. Despite operating on a cramped site with uninspiring facilities, this is an exciting and stimulating school which is having a huge impact on the lives and education of the children and families it serves. Given the staff's carefully researched programmes for improvement, often externally validated, there is an outstanding capacity to continue to improve. It provides excellent value for money.

Children start with exceptionally low levels of attainment, and many have high levels of need. Yet, by the time they leave they are attaining standards that are in line with those expected nationally in almost all respects. The staff's success in enabling the children to become skilful writers is especially noteworthy. By the end of Year 2, reading skills are the only area which falls just below national expectations. Children enjoy books and stories, but struggle to comprehend new texts at an appropriate level as they lack the necessary command of English. Nevertheless, the progress of all children, whatever their background or starting point is at least good and overall is exceptional. As a result, their achievement is outstanding.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers and teaching assistants are praised by the parents for the time and effort that they put into supporting the children. This is not just in class, but in extra-curricular activities as well. The school's commitment to the Children's University after school courses is one of several areas which helps to raise attainment across all subjects. Innovative ideas from the Pistoia schools in Italy have been used to invigorate the curriculum which is now outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistants fully engage the children in the planning of their work; this motivates children and makes them enthusiastic learners.

The personal development and well-being of the children is good. Many aspects, such as pupils' behaviour and knowledge of healthy and safe lifestyles are excellent. The weakest feature of this aspect is the level of attendance which has recently fallen. There are specific reasons for this; many of the new arrivals at the school come from families new to the country, who have either had no experience of education or are not familiar with starting ages in the UK. Staff have worked hard to improve their understanding, but recognise that they can still do even more to integrate these families and support their children.

The care, guidance and support provided by the staff are outstanding. Children are not only given excellent pastoral care, but the academic guidance they receive is designed to guarantee at least good progress in their learning. The first class assessment systems devised and deployed by the staff ensure that children who are falling behind are quickly identified, and given targeted support. There are very ambitious targets for all children, and remarkably, these are nearly always achieved.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Hardly any children starting at the Nursery have any pre-school experience. The school's baseline assessments show that many of the children barely score on the age-related national scales, yet children make excellent progress overall in the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the time they leave this stage, 10% of the children are attaining at the nationally expected levels in all areas. Children's progress in their personal and social skills, their physical and creative development as well as their knowledge and understanding of the world is outstanding. This is the result of excellent teaching in the Nursery and good teaching in Reception, alongside very high expectations from all staff.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is very well led and managed. At the last inspection, the assessment structure for this stage was considered to be in need of improvement. The systems devised and improved since then are creative, rigorous and accurate. They make a major contribution to the progress the children make. This is because they enable staff to pinpoint the next steps in the children's learning and rapidly react to areas where children are struggling to make progress. The high quality of the management is evident in the very special care and support provided for the children. As a result, children feel safe and secure and develop into confident learners, well prepared for the next stage in their education. The outdoor area is used well with activities often cleverly linked to the classroom focus, although there is scope to develop the exterior further. There are very strong links with parents and with outside agencies. The family learning groups make an important contribution to the children's enjoyment of school and their success as learners.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the school's processes to improve children's skills in reading comprehension.
- Improve the induction process to support the integration of children and families new to the school.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

From the time they start at the school to the time they leave, children make at least good progress, and for many it is outstanding. Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly in line with those expected nationally. They are strongest in writing thanks to the school-wide emphasis on developing confident, enthusiastic writers. Standards in reading although not as high, are improving and are just below those expected. Many of the children struggle to attain the expected level of comprehension skills as they lack sufficient knowledge and experience of English. Standards in mathematics have steadily improved and they too are now in line with national expectations.

The staff work hard to ensure that all children, whatever their background or starting points achieve success. There has been a steady increase in the number of children achieving the higher levels in all the assessed aspects. The growing numbers of children who now require extra support with their learning make excellent progress relative to their starting points. Those children for whom English is not their first language, the great majority at the school, make at least good progress in all areas of their learning. The key to this success is the leadership's systems for checking that all groups and each individual stay on track with their ambitious targets.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

The staff's strong focus on making learning enjoyable and on developing the whole child has led to children's good personal development. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, ensuring they get on very well with each other at work and at play. Children new to the school quickly learn what is acceptable and conform to the high expectations. The children say that the vast majority of their peers behave well all the time. Indeed, the trained playground mediators' complaint is that they have too few opportunities to put their knowledge and skills into practice. The children have an excellent understanding of what they need to do to stay healthy. Children are given very good opportunities to be active. The daily, 'Take 10' session, has everyone, staff and children participating and enjoying themselves. Fruit is available throughout the day and children are developing an excellent awareness of what constitutes a healthy diet. They have good opportunities to take on responsibilities within the school community.

The school's links with overseas schools brings a global dimension to children's understanding of community and their place in it. They are well prepared for the next stage of their schooling and adult life by gaining basic skills in English and mathematics and developing very good social and interpersonal skills. Children say they thoroughly enjoy school and this was confirmed by their positive attitudes and excellent behaviour during the inspection. However, attendance is below average. This is despite sterling efforts of the staff to motivate children and their families to be on time and attend regularly.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The staff work hard to sustain and improve the quality of teaching and learning. All staff have very high expectations. Teaching is mostly good though with some sessions that are outstanding. The many positive strategies which have been implemented since the last inspection have led to improved progress in children's learning. Children work hard and pay attention because their teachers and teaching assistants have developed very good relationships with them. Teaching assistants provide very effective support, they use their initiative, are skilled and knowledgeable. In the best lessons, there is a good pace to learning and children have activities to complete at different levels of difficulty. In all classes, good assessment opportunities allow targets to be shared and revisited to check progress. Just occasionally, work is not pitched at the right level, and children who could be more independent are held back, while those who need more opportunities for active learning have to wait while the majority have activities explained.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding because staff make children's learning as exciting and stimulating as possible. Staff go out of their way to make learning enjoyable and have revised the curriculum to ensure it meets or exceeds children's needs. Their success in getting children to be confident, competent writers is one result of the changes they have initiated. The dynamic curriculum is planned from the children's perspectives, not those of adults or external agencies. Staff test out what they are doing, monitor it to ensure that it is effective and seek every opportunity to

engage children and enrich their experiences. Opportunities to explore the arts, work in other languages, use information and communication technology inventively, visit places of interest, or work with other schools are seized upon and exploited very well. The significant commitment from all staff ensures that extra-curricular activities enhance many aspects of learning. Children enjoy what they learn.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Pastoral care and guidance of children are excellent because the school has successfully implemented a very effective system to track and monitor childrens' progress so that they are challenged to achieve their best at all times. All the requirements to ensure children's safety and well-being are in place. Children are confident staff will help them to resolve any issues or worries they have, so they feel safe and well looked after. The school has a calm purposeful atmosphere and children feel valued. Children say that teachers tell them what is good about their work and what they need to do to make it better. The staff now identify children who need extra help with their learning at an early stage and intervene very effectively to keep them on track to meet the very ambitious targets they set.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are outstanding because they have been instrumental in improving the school markedly since the last inspection. All areas identified have been addressed successfully and as a result, standards and the progress children make has improved. The headteacher has established a warm and caring ethos in the school where everyone feels welcomed and valued and children enjoy learning. The school's leadership and governors show a strong commitment and determination to continuous school improvement. This enthusiasm is tempered by a willingness to learn from others and to constantly test and evaluate what they are doing. Staff work hard to ensure that all children and where possible, their families are fully included in the life of the school. The school's self-evaluation is realistic and is a good basis for improvement. It has a good understanding of its own teaching and learning and knows what needs to be done to improve further. The school is at the centre of the community it serves. Community cohesion is good, although the school recognises that it needs to make further provision to integrate newcomers. The degree of harmony in this diverse community is testimony to the school's success in supporting the community cohesion agenda. Staff are undaunted by the considerable and rapidly changing challenges they face and wholly committed to giving their children the best possible start to their education.



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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, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

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<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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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	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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</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?	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**

27 March 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Derby St Chad's CofE (VC) Nursery and Infant School, Derby DE23 6WR

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school. I would like to share with you what we found out.

We had two very enjoyable days in your school. We were very impressed with how polite, thoughtful and caring you are. We think that the way you look after each other, and use your initiative to care for the school and others is splendid. We were also delighted to hear from you how much you enjoy coming to school.

We think that you go to an excellent school and that it is continuing to get better. The really great progress you make reflects all the hard work that you and the staff put in. We were especially pleased with your success as writers. Well done, keep it up.

When we watched your lessons and looked at your work, we could see that your teachers and teaching assistants have some really great ideas to help you. However, we would like your teachers to look at even more ways to improve your reading so that you get a better understanding of the information and stories you read.

One of the other things that impressed us was the improvement your teachers have made to the subjects you study. We could see why you are pleased by this more interesting way of learning. It really is good to see you so excited about learning.

I would also like to congratulate the school council on the work they are doing. They are right in wanting improvements to your school building and resources. You and your teachers do deserve something better.

One of the few things we were concerned about was the fact that just a few of you, usually those who have just arrived at your school, do not come to school regularly. It would be great if those of you who do go every day could help and encourage the newcomers to attend as well as you do.

Thank you once again for your warm welcome.

All the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Roger Brown

Lead inspector