

# Horden Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113986
<b>Local Authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	325919
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gordon Potter

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>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	70
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Elizabeth Wood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Barbara Wilkin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 November 2005
<b>School address</b>	Cotsford Park Horden Peterlee County Durham SR8 4TB
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 5865415
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 5870804

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<b>Age group</b>	3–4
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a 102 place Nursery situated in a very deprived area of County Durham. Everyone attends part-time. Most children enter Nursery with skills that are well below those expected for children of the same age. Almost all pupils are White British and they all speak English as their first language. An above average number of children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and an average number have a statement of special educational needs. The headteacher is also responsible for educational provision at the local Children's Centre.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Horden Nursery School is an outstanding school which makes a real difference to the lives of its children, their families and to the local community. After previous glowing inspection reports, the inspirational headteacher has allowed no complacency and the school is even better now than it was at the time of its last inspection. Parents say how much their children love coming to school and unanimously appreciate the way all members of staff care for their children and encourage them to flourish. The school is responsible for the outstanding Nursery provision at the local Children's Centre. The way all children's services work together has had a significant impact on the lives of families in Horden and is an exemplary instance of a school playing a central part in promoting the well-being of its community.

There is a trend of improving standards and children leave Nursery with skills which are above what is expected for their age. From starting points which are often well below what is expected for their age, this means that children's achievement is outstanding. This is because learning is excellent and teachers recognise the children's individual needs and provide stimulating and exciting activities to help them to achieve in all six areas of learning. Children's progress is accurately and meticulously measured so that work can be planned which helps all children to thrive. Adults work closely and sensitively alongside children to support their learning and ascertain what they have understood. Occasionally, they intervene too much in children's play or ask questions which do not allow children to develop their own ideas. The school has been involved in an initiative where two-year-olds learned in the Nursery setting. These children are currently in the Nursery as three-year-olds and continue to build on the exceptional progress they made as two-year-olds. The school also understands that children learn best if their parents are involved in their learning. Accordingly, it has developed highly effective programmes which have involved and enthused parents and had an impact on children's achievement and personal development.

Children's personal development is outstanding, including their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. They quickly develop social skills so that they work well together and care deeply for one another. The school promotes community cohesion through encouraging children to appreciate differences between individuals and to understand the way different cultures celebrate major events in their lives. Children are aware of the beauty of the natural world and the need to care for their local environment. They understand the need for basic hygiene, that they must eat healthily and be active. Their behaviour is exemplary because their enjoyment of school is absolute and adults encourage them to understand the need for rules and routines. They are extremely well prepared for their future economic well-being because the school develops their skills in language, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) and encourages them to work productively with others. They visit local businesses and learn to use money. Attendance is good because the school emphasises the importance of regular attendance.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The experienced and universally respected headteacher leads a dedicated team which is devoted to improving the quality of the learning experience for all the children in its care. Teachers and nursery nurses thrive on the autonomy they are given and all are accountable and responsible for the continuous improvements in the school. Value for money is outstanding because of inspirational teaching, very effective deployment of staff and stimulating resources which enthuse the children. Governors strongly

support the work of the school. In the light of the continued improvement from such a high position at the last inspection the school has outstanding capacity to improve.

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

- Improve teachers' skills in asking questions to allow children the time to develop their own ideas.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Standards are above average and achievement is outstanding. From starting points that are well below what is typical for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy and personal and social development, children make outstanding progress. When they leave Nursery many have reached standards which are above what is expected of their age. There is a trend of improvement over the last three years, especially in the areas of communication, language and literacy and mathematics because of the necessary focus placed on these skills by the school. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make excellent progress. The school was involved in a pilot in which two-year-olds learned in the nursery setting. These children made outstanding progress. The school is ensuring that this progress is built upon.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Children's personal development and well-being are excellent. They feel safe and secure and know how to act safely. They are aware of the benefits of healthy eating and are physically active. They are confident and independent and eager to talk about their experiences. Behaviour and moral and social development are outstanding because children work extremely well together and care deeply for one another. Their cultural and spiritual awareness is extremely well developed. Pupils have a real sense of wonder at the natural world which is encouraged by their regular visits to the beach. They celebrate cultural and spiritual events from different cultures and are very aware of their local area. They contribute outstandingly to the local community by their commitment to the environment and the high profile they have on visits to local shops, allotments and churches. Children enjoy school. Parents talk of the love their children have for school and say that they would come on Saturday and Sunday. Attendance is good although there are a few hard-to-reach families whose children do not attend as regularly as the majority. Children are exceptionally well prepared for the future. They make outstanding progress in the key skills of literacy and numeracy and show developing competence in ICT. They have strong group work skills. Role-play activities and visits to local businesses, such as the bakery and the dentist, have developed their understanding of money and raised their aspirations.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Effectiveness in promoting children's learning and development**

#### **Grade: 1**

The school's effectiveness in promoting children's learning and development is outstanding. High expectations of what children can achieve and a clear understanding of how they learn ensure that children make the very best progress possible. A rich and relevant range of interesting and stimulating learning activities both inside and outside allows children to thrive.

Children's work is meticulously assessed so that activities are planned around their individual interests and needs. For example, children led an activity which involved them visiting the local bakery and establishing their own shop in the Nursery. There is a strong development of all areas of learning with noteworthy emphasis on creativity in painting, music and movement and constructional and technological skills like the use of digital cameras and digital microscopes. The curriculum is extremely carefully balanced between free choice and directed learning and this ensures the children develop skills in number and communication, language and literacy.

Relationships are outstanding so that children are secure to develop their investigative and group work skills and to become independent learners. Teachers use questions well to support children's learning, although occasionally adults can dominate conversations and closed questions prevent children developing their ideas. Behaviour is exemplary because children enjoy their learning and because there are clear routines and expectations which help them to settle quickly into Nursery. The school recognises the important role that parents play in children's learning and has established an outstanding programme that involves parents in activities and encourages them to use the local area as a learning environment. There is also a varied programme of enrichment activities which are integrated into children's learning, such as visits to the theatre, which all children enjoy. The school ensures that the effectiveness of provision in promoting children's learning and development in the Children's Centre is also outstanding.

## **Effectiveness in promoting children's welfare**

### **Grade: 1**

The school's effectiveness in promoting children's welfare is outstanding. All members of staff on both sites of the Nursery have an intimate knowledge of the diverse needs of each child. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified before they start the Nursery so that their needs can be rapidly catered for. There are excellent relationships with the many outside agencies with which the school works. These have been further strengthened by the school's central role in the development of the Children's Centre. The school knows that children's welfare is best addressed when parents play an active role and contact with these agencies is arranged to maximise access for parents. All safeguarding, risk assessment and health and safety procedures are rigorously applied. Transition into the Nursery and into the infant schools which the children join ensures that children are ready for the next phase of their education. Children's progress is tracked methodically so that teachers know how well they are achieving and can plan appropriately challenging work. Parents are informed regularly about their children's progress. They particularly appreciate the photographic records they receive of their children's work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are outstanding. The inspirational leadership of the headteacher has ensured that the school has continued to develop and to extend the range of its influence in the local community. She knows the school extremely well and continues to set challenging targets which have improved attainment. She has developed a highly effective team of suitably qualified early years practitioners. The headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher, who has developed excellent provision for gifted and talented children, and the teacher responsible for the success of the Nursery provision in the Children's Centre. While the headteacher maintains meticulous monitoring, all members of staff have autonomy to develop

their areas of accountability and they thrive on it. They develop their expertise through professional development which is carefully targeted and related to the school's improvement plan. Resources have been used effectively to develop the office area as recommended in the last inspection report. More importantly, resources have been deployed to maintain a staffing level that supports individual children and to create a stimulating learning environment. Governance is good. Governors are hugely supportive of the headteacher although they are less proactive in initiating developments. Equality of opportunity for all children is central to the school's aims and staff ensure that all children are able to participate fully.

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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	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**

9 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Horden Nursery School, Durham, SR8 4TB

Thank you for making me welcome in your school. I liked talking to you very much and watching you enjoy your work. You work well with your friends and care for one another.

Your school is an outstanding school. You love coming to Nursery because your teachers care for you very much. They make your learning exciting and help you to improve.

You do lots of fun activities in school like painting, taking photographs and using the computers. You enjoy going to the beach and to the shops. Your teachers are also helping you to learn the skills that will help you to read and write and be good at number work.

Sometimes your teachers help you too much so I have asked them to do one thing to make your learning even better.

- Ask you questions that help you to think for yourselves and develop your ideas.

The school likes your parents to help you to learn. You can help by talking to your parents about your learning and about the things you see around you.

You are very lucky to have such a lovely school. And your teachers are very lucky to have such lovely children.

Keep on having fun and working hard!

Best wishes

Gordon Potter

Lead inspector