

# Arden Grove Infant and Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120927
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	327392
<b>Inspection date</b>	6 February 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jackie Cousins

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)	204
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 Rebecca Bell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Daniel Thrower
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 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>	Arden Grove Hellesdon Norwich Norfolk NR6 6QA

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<b>Age group</b>	3–7
<b>Inspection date</b>	6 February 2009
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**Telephone number**  
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- Do girls make good progress in Nursery and Reception and are standards in mathematics and physical development high enough by the end of the Reception Year?
- How effectively do leaders monitor the progress and attainment in Key Stage 1 of girls in each year group, including pupils from minority ethnic groups?
- How well is the school using pupil targets to increase their rate of progress, especially in reading and mathematics?
- How effectively is the school's leadership working to develop pupils' involvement in the United Kingdom community?

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.

Evidence was gathered from discussions with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, senior teachers, staff, children, the chair and other governors, observations of teaching and displays. Other evidence considered included an analysis of pupils' work in exercise books, school data on standards and progress, and parents' questionnaires.

## Description of the school

This is an average size infant school near Norwich. The number of children entitled to free school meals is below the national average. An above average proportion has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This group includes pupils with moderate learning difficulties, autism and behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. Virtually all children are from White British backgrounds. Children in Nursery and Reception classes follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. The school has Artsmark, Activemark, Eco-schools Green Flag award and Healthy Schools award.

The Arden Grove Pre-School was inspected at the same time as the school. As it is not managed by the school, its inspection findings are reported separately.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Arden Grove Infant and Nursery is a good school. It has some outstanding features. The pupils get a flourishing start to their future education from Nursery right up to Year 2. Pupils of all abilities enjoy school life as they are so enthusiastic and are included exceptionally well in activities. This is because an outstanding partnership is in place between the school staff, parents and other agencies. One parent summed it up by saying, 'I feel this is a super school. The support and care of the teachers and staff is second to none.' The vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire are extremely pleased with the progress their children are making and their enjoyment of school.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding and is a considerable strength of the school. This is because all staff give pupils a highly committed and excellent level of care, guidance and support. An outstanding dedication to meeting pupils' individual needs and giving them an equal opportunity to succeed is clearly visible in the school. For instance, small group work supports pupils' emotional development and the celebration assembly, extremely thoughtfully, raises their self-esteem. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles outstandingly well because the school encourages them to eat sensibly and take regular exercise. For example, pupils learn to cook healthy meals with guidance provided by specialist support from the local secondary school. Regular tuition with specialist instructors from the school sports partnership means pupils enjoy a wide range of activities. Discussions enable pupils to learn extremely effectively how to keep themselves safe inside and outside school. Pupils understand very well the dangers of the internet because of the school's diligence in teaching them about personal safety. The school works carefully to safeguard pupils and ensure that procedures meet requirements. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They learn to consider their own and others' feelings well because assemblies are used effectively. The school council succeeds in encouraging all pupils to offer ideas about how to make the school even better. Behaviour is outstanding in lessons and at break times. Attendance is above average and pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education as a result of the good literacy, numeracy and social skills that they develop in school.

The high priority given by school leaders to maintaining at least good achievement and standards means that Year 2 results in 2008 were exceptionally high in writing, and significantly above average in reading and mathematics. The school set and met challenging targets, especially in English. Standards in Year 2 have been significantly above average for the last two years and have risen steadily since 2006. Current assessments of Year 2 show that standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Girls and boys achieve well, making good progress from their starting points on entry to the school, which are broadly typical of those expected nationally. One of the keys to the school's success is its use of a detailed system to track pupils' attainment and progress, and the extra support given to pupils who are underachieving. A considerable amount of work in small groups, led by skilled teachers and teaching assistants, ensures pupils at different stages of development achieve effectively. This use of time enables pupils to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils who have additional literacy and numeracy needs or a statement of special educational needs receive extremely thoughtful support and so they make good progress. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve well because a careful check is kept on their progress and it is in line with that of most pupils in the school.

Good teaching is another important reason why pupils make effective progress in all aspects of their learning. Teachers challenge pupils successfully and explain complex ideas carefully. Staff thoughtfully extend pupils that are more able and so at least one third of all pupils reach high standards. Pupils' basic skills develop well because teachers knowledgably explain how to record information clearly. Strong features of teaching include the successful use of questioning that prompts pupils to learn to think deeply and creatively. Marking is used very carefully especially in Year 2, for example, teachers add specific feedback on what pupils have done well. Pupils' personal targets in literacy ensure that they are clear about how to improve their writing. The use of targets in mathematics and reading is developing appropriately. Occasionally, learning objectives are not specific enough. As a result, the end of the lesson does not always successfully evaluate what learning occurred and what future activities will focus on.

Pupils take huge enjoyment in the wide range of learning opportunities planned for them. A rich and good curriculum is in use. Pupils talked passionately about the many things that they like doing in school. They singled out extended writing sessions as being one of their favourites. One pupil said, 'I love Big Writing,' and another said, 'I feel sad when Big Writing finishes.' Displays around the school celebrate, and pupils' work in books demonstrates, the impressive quality of their writing, historical and artistic skills. The school is refining its planning for gifted and talented pupils so that they have even more opportunities to develop their abilities. Visits out of school and visitors to the school enrich the pupils' school days. Many pupils in different year groups really enjoy the physical education sessions that they have in school time. A significant proportion of pupils enhance their skills in sports, art, music and gardening successfully through a very good range of clubs. Having achieved the highest Eco-schools Green Flag Award means pupils have a strong awareness of sustainable development. At present pupils are growing trees, which will be planted to enhance several forest areas in the United Kingdom.

Good leadership and management have brought about thriving improvements. A significant development since the last inspection is that pupils have good provision to develop their writing skills. Outstanding leadership by the headteacher and senior leadership team ensure that the school has clear direction for improvement and self-evaluation is rigorous. Subject leaders manage their areas successfully and create specific action plans for further improvement. The school's leaders work well to unite the community, and pupils contribute to the community effectively. For example, the school's leaders ensure that the pupils participate happily in many competitions in the area. Due to the school's strong leadership, pupils develop their understanding of national and global issues well, and collect for people in other countries who are less fortunate than they are. For instance, pupils are successfully supporting an orphanage in India by writing to its children and raising money to improve resources for them. Governance is good and works successfully to challenge the school's leadership. Governors have good knowledge of the school and make effective use of the information they gather about the school, but they rarely interview pupils. The continued good quality of education and above average standards indicate that the school is in a good position to continue to improve in the future.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children settle quickly into school life because staff work thoughtfully with parents to get to know their children's interests. Boys and girls make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. Standards rise by the start of Year 1 to being slightly above those typically found

nationally. This is particularly so in knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative development. A significant strength is children's personal development, which is outstanding because staff excellently ensure the welfare and well-being of every child. Children in the Nursery and Reception class happily join together to sing songs and work independently due to the thoughtful way that staff have organised the resources.

The children develop their basic skills well because staff use effective teaching methods. For example, in a good session in the Nursery, children learnt to recognise repeating patterns because resources were effectively organised in a logical way. Practical activities allow children to improve their skills in a memorable way. For instance, pupils learnt how to combine materials successfully when they baked gingerbread men. Children learn to use language to express their own careful thinking because the staff very skilfully ask challenging questions. They learn to read using letter sounds successfully because of structured teaching and assessment. Staff monitor children's involvement rigorously to ensure that they experience a wide variety of activities. Staff assessments regularly outline what children can do, but do not always record effectively the next steps children could take to improve.

The leadership of this stage of education is good. Consequently, the children have a wealth of opportunities to learn in the inside areas and to use information and communication technology comprehensively. The outside areas offer children good opportunities to develop their skills. Senior leaders monitor and track children's progress carefully in Nursery and Reception classes.

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

- Make sure learning objectives are made highly specific so that at the end of lessons teachers effectively evaluate with pupils their successes and where they can improve their work.
- Develop the use of assessment in the Nursery and Reception to ensure that records lay out more clearly what next steps children will take in their learning.

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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?	1
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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### 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	2

<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>	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	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?	1

## 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	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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	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**

9 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Arden Grove Infant and Nursery School, Hellesdon, NR6 6QA

Thank you for helping me to find out about your school. I enjoyed watching lessons and talking to some of you. You attend a happy and friendly school. Good things about your school include:

- you make good progress in your work
- you concentrate and behave very well in school
- you really enjoy all the things you do at school
- your headteacher and teachers have very good ideas about ways to improve the school
- teaching is good and the staff work hard to make sessions interesting
- an excellent partnership is in place between the school, your parents and others
- staff care for you really well and listen to you thoughtfully.

I have asked your school to look at how they can make things even better. The most important matters are to:

- make sure that targets in lessons are clearer so that you can evaluate your successes better
- ensure that records in Nursery and Reception set out in detail the next steps that you will take in your learning.

Continue to listen carefully to staff comments, come to school everyday and enjoy all the super things you are learning at Arden Grove Infant and Nursery School.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Cousins

Lead inspector