

Nettleworth Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122440
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	327730
Inspection date	9 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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)	313
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 Ian Bartle
Headteacher	Mrs Jenny Bennett
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Ley Lane Mansfield Woodhouse Mansfield Nottinghamshire NG19 8LD

Age group	3–7
Inspection date	9 June 2009
Inspection number	327730

Telephone number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school. In addition, the following issues were investigated.

- How well are the current Year 2 pupils progressing particularly in mathematics?
- How well do the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieve?
- How strong is the quality of teaching and learning?

Evidence was gathered from the school's analysis of pupils' progress, a scrutiny of samples of their work and observations of pupils in lessons. Discussions were held with staff, governors and pupils. In addition, the responses of 84 parents' questionnaires were analysed and their comments taken into account. 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 in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Nettleworth is a larger than average infant school. It serves the village of Mansfield Woodhouse although a substantial minority of pupils come from outside the immediate area. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a large Nursery unit which accepts children on a part-time basis. Children in the Reception year are taught alongside Year 1 children in three classes, and in two reception classes. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Of these pupils, the needs vary from behavioural, emotional, social and learning difficulties. The school has gained a large number of awards including Investors in People and Healthy Schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school was outstanding in its previous inspection and it continues to maintain this exceptional high quality. Parents are unanimous in their support and have great confidence in the school. Their positive comments are summarised by parents who wrote: 'Excellence started in the Nursery has been unfaltering ever since. There is something in place for every child's needs'. The school's fundamental aim of ensuring it provides nurturing care for all pupils is met in full and this, when combined with outstanding teaching and the rich and varied curriculum helps pupils to make outstanding progress. Children love school and learning. As school councillors say, 'We get to learn new things every day and we learn really clever things because our teachers explain stuff very well.'

When children join the Nursery, their skills and knowledge are broadly in line with those typically found for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage though progress quickens in Years 1 and 2. By the time they leave Year 2 standards are consistently well above average. On occasion, particularly in reading and writing, standards are exceptionally high. All groups of pupils, whatever their academic capability or learning needs, achieve exceptionally well. For example, pupils who find learning hard progress particularly well because the provision is carefully tailored to their needs. In addition, excellent tracking of pupils' progress means that any pupils in danger of slipping behind are quickly identified and their needs met. Pupils do particularly well in reading and writing. This is because there is a rigorous emphasis on learning basic skills and then using them well in lessons. The focus on writing in the past two years has brought particular benefits because current Year 2 pupils are on course to attain standards that are particularly high with the number of pupils attaining the highest level having increased. In the past, standards in mathematics have not been as strong as reading and writing. This is not now the case because there has been a good emphasis on strengthening aspects of the curriculum, particularly in problem solving, which has ensured that standards have leapt to their current well above average level. Because provision for the arts is strong, standards are much above expected levels in both art and music. The school environment is enlivened by a myriad of art work of outstanding quality. The work styled on that of Lowry is particularly impressive and demonstrates standards far above those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2.

At the last inspection, the headteacher's leadership was evaluated as being outstanding. This continues to be the case. She is much admired by the whole school community and, although pivotal to the outstanding overall effectiveness of the school, she has ensured that other members of staff make a strong contribution. Teamwork remains very strong with the views of all members of staff being valued and sought. This has led to high staff morale and also a shared commitment by all staff to the ongoing improvement of the school. It is also recognised by the school being accredited as an 'Investor in People'. All leaders play an important part in the excellent procedures in place to check provision and progress which ensures that the school's self-evaluation procedures are outstanding. They prepare good quality plans to develop the school still further. Governance is good. Governors play an important part in the school's life and provide strong strategic direction and they successfully ensure that all regulatory requirements are met. However, at present, they are a little over-reliant on the headteacher for information. The strengthening of teaching and learning and the continuing high achievement in pupils' personal and academic development demonstrates an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

Pupils thrive in their learning because the provision is excellent. Resources are very impressive both for the outdoor areas and also for learning in the classrooms. The whole school environment demonstrates the excellence and celebration of children's work and each classroom presents as an outstanding place to learn. The quality of teaching and learning has improved from its good levels at the time of the previous inspection and it is now outstanding overall. The school's emphasis on strengthening pupils' learning is paying dividends because almost all teaching is at least good and many lessons are outstanding. Lessons are underpinned by excellent relationships and behaviour management by teachers who enable all classrooms to have a calm and purposeful atmosphere. They are adept at ensuring that the tasks presented are exciting and are matched very well to the differing learning needs present in each class. In consequence, pupils of all abilities make excellent progress. One further development since the previous inspection has been the additional investment in classroom support staff. These assistants make an excellent contribution to the school's provision. They are highly skilled and very well trained and they support individuals and small groups of pupils very effectively.

The curriculum continues to be outstanding. An innovative and extensive programme of units of work has been devised and care has been taken to ensure that subjects are linked together. Learning is invariably based on first hand experiences and the themes being studied are adapted so that they are relevant to Nettleworth pupils whilst continuing to meet statutory requirements. These developments are complemented by a number of focused learning weeks such as for the arts, sports and books as well as themed weeks such as 'castles' and 'colours'. In addition learning is enlivened by many visitors to the school such as puppeteers, drama groups and specialist developing circus skills.

The school is a very happy, harmonious and safe place. Requirements governing pupils' safety are met in full. Personal development is outstanding. The rich and supportive personal, social and emotional curriculum ensures that pupils are helped to gain the excellent social skills, high self esteem and confidence to equip them for their future lives. Their moral and social development is particularly impressive. They thoroughly enjoy their plant growing area within the 'Dragon World' which is a new and exceptionally well resourced outdoor learning area. This aids and develops their excellent understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle which is further recognised in gaining the Healthy School award. In addition, the wide range of sporting activities helps them to be fit and healthy and their behaviour is outstanding. Even though some children enter the school with emotional and behavioural difficulties, by the time they reach Year 2, these barriers to learning have generally been successfully overcome and this reflects the outstanding support for these pupils. Pupils actively contribute to the community with school councillors being proud of their achievements in helping the school to improve and insisting that inspectors review their ever-rising graph to show the large amounts of money collected to support children in Africa. This is the result of many pupil-initiated activities including the next event in which they are having a bring-and-buy sale of unwanted toys. They are also proud of their visit to the local allotments to check out how they may become even more eco-friendly. In addition, pupils recently contributed to the District Council's plan to provide ideas for a new park. This is a further example of the school's effective promotion of community cohesion.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's welfare and their personal development are both outstanding aspects of a good Early Years Foundation Stage. The various excellent outdoor areas contain a vast array of exciting

resources, well used for climbing, developing muscle control and coordination and playing imaginatively. The good progress children make is characterised by consistently good teaching and regular use of the outside space for all areas of learning. Children become totally absorbed in their play. They are given a good amount of independence when they formally decide and tell staff what they will play with first. They are given scope to take risks and learn from their mistakes, as for example when they freewheel down the slope, knowing that they have to be careful to avoid coming off their bikes. Children thrive in an environment where they are encouraged, supported and challenged to give of their best. Adults know the children very well and are good at tailoring activities so they best appeal to them, for example, by directing one pupil towards dinosaur related counting games because they knew he is captivated by dinosaurs. Teamwork is excellent and teachers and teaching assistants work together seamlessly, so that when children work in small groups or are together as a whole class the teaching is consistently good. The potentially challenging behaviour of a small number of children is handled very well. Through the use of clear routines, extra adult support and consistent praise and rewards for doing the right thing. The assessments of how children are progressing are regular and thorough. However, systems are not manageable enough to enable senior leaders to regularly and easily monitor and analyse the results of different classes or groups. As a result, it is more difficult to check overall progress or to speedily spot potentially weaker areas of provision. The secure start children make, especially in early reading, linking sounds to letters and mathematical skills, provides a firm foundation for further accelerated learning when they enter Key Stage 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Review and refine data-gathering arrangements for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in order to check more effectively the quality of provision and its impact on children's progress.

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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?	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?	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

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	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

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	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**

10 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nettleworth Infant and Nursery School, Mansfield Woodhouse, NG19 8LG.

We enjoyed meeting with you and listening to what you had to say about your school. I particularly enjoyed your assembly and meeting with the school council. We thought that your 'Dragon's World' space is brilliant and we were amazed to hear that your school council played such big part in helping to design it for you. This letter is to tell you what we found when we came to Nettleworth. We think you are very lucky to attend such an excellent school.

Here are some of the things that we found:

- We can understand why you all like school so much because all the adults look after you exceptionally well and make sure that you are happy and safe and you all thoroughly enjoy your time at school.
- Your headteacher is doing an excellent job and makes sure that your school runs smoothly and that all the adults work closely together to make sure that you learn well.
- You work hard, behave outstandingly well, and your teachers make sure that you make excellent progress by making lessons interesting. Teachers also make sure that there is an excellent range of things for you to do both in lessons and in the many clubs that you enjoy.
- You have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy. You told us about what you like to eat and the sports you like to play.

We have asked your headteacher and governors to concentrate on one particular area. This is for your teachers of children aged up to five to make sure that they continually check the information about your progress in learning so that they can make it even quicker for the youngest children.

I hope that you will all keep on working hard and enjoy your time at school.

Yours faithfully,

Keith Sadler

Lead inspector