

# The Nottingham Nursery School and Training Centre

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135108
<b>Local Authority</b>	City of Nottingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	334460
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jackie Cousins

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	112
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Peter Morris
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jill Robey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Denman Street West Radford Nottingham NG7 3AB
<b>Telephone number</b>	0115 9159090
<b>Fax number</b>	0115 9159091

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<b>Age group</b>	2–5
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average Nursery school which opened in September 2008. Children attend from three to five years of age. From the age of two, they are able to access the national pilot for school provision for two year olds of 15 hours a week for 38 weeks each year. Eight out of every ten children are from minority ethnic backgrounds; two out of ten are from White British backgrounds. An above average proportion of the children is eligible for free school meals. The percentage of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Particular difficulties are in: speech and language, communication, and social and emotional development. Four out of every ten children are at an early stage in learning English as an additional language. A significant proportion of children join or leave part way through the taught year. All children at the school are in the Early Years Foundation Stage and develop their skills in four main spaces, and in a large outside area which has all-weather cover.

Childcare is integrated into the school's provision at any one time for a maximum of 90 two to five year olds. It is managed by the school governors and inspection findings are included in this report. Childcare may be provided for a maximum of 20 children aged two to three years within the total capacity of the 90 two to five year olds. It is available from 07.30 to 18.00 during term times and school holidays, except for one week at Christmas and one in the summer. Children attend a wide variety of sessions.

Training courses for early years' practitioners are provided in a separate part of the building on-site.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The Nottingham Nursery School and Training Centre is a good place to learn. Children get a wonderful start to their education. Whether they start at the beginning or part-way through the taught year, children of all abilities and backgrounds settle quickly into school life. This is because all staff give them a highly committed and excellent level of care, support and welfare. An outstanding partnership between the school's leaders, staff, other agencies and parents is in place to promote learners' well-being. One parent accurately summed it up by saying, 'The staff have all been welcoming and friendly.....The headteacher and staff work so well together that this is reflected in the learning environment and facilities. It truly feels like we're leaving our child with family.' Staff are very easy to talk to at the beginning and end of the sessions, so that parents can discuss any concerns and gain advice. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that their children enjoy their time at school and feel safe and well cared for. On at least four occasions each year, parents can come in to discuss their child's attainment and progress with staff using the folders which hold examples of each learner's work.

Children gain great enjoyment from the many rich and varied learning activities set them. It is clear from watching them for a short time how much fun and learning occur each day. Staff thoughtfully develop children's skills in topics that cover many areas of learning at one time. Exciting projects are undertaken to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, they learn directly about the life cycle of butterflies from the cocoons that hatch out within an enclosure at school. Occasionally, children's involvement in key activities is not recorded rigorously, so not everyone is clear about who has achieved successfully. Learners' personal development is good. They adopt healthy lifestyles outstandingly well. Children are well prepared for the next stage of education because their independence and social skills are well developed and they make good progress in key skills.

Good teaching allows children to expand their knowledge and understanding effectively. Staff have high expectations of them. Consequently, children achieve well, but because of their low starting points on entry to the school, standards are below average when they leave. On a daily basis, staff use assessment well. They spend considerable time getting to know the children and planning activities which really appeal to both boys and girls. Staff raise children's self-esteem with positive, encouraging comments. Occasionally, children are not totally clear about what their next steps should be in the key areas of learning. This is because staff do not always give each child detailed feedback on what has been attained and areas for improvement.

Effective leadership and management have established a strong team spirit within the staff. They use self-evaluation well. Although the school only opened in September 2008 and its track record of performance is, inevitably, short, it is in a good position to continue to improve. For instance, many staff have completed training in how to support those who are learning to speak English as an additional language and provision is, consequently, good. The school's development plan is not detailed enough, and does not specify enough objectives which can be accurately measured. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are not yet involved effectively in thorough monitoring of the school's performance and improvement planning.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards by improving the quality of feedback for children and next steps targets so that they know which skills they have used well and which they could use more to improve their learning.
- Ensure that all children's involvement in key activities is monitored consistently so that those who have not completed them are identified clearly and supported to do so successfully.
- Develop the role of governors so that they are involved more effectively in monitoring school performance and in making a development plan with measurable criteria.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

School leaders make children's progress a priority. The assessments made at Easter 2009 show that children made good progress from low starting points on entry to the school. Overall, standards are below national expectations by the time children leave, especially in language, literacy and mathematical development. They are slightly above typical standards in social development. Standards are broadly in line with those expected in knowledge and understanding of the world. Attainment of different groups, including that of boys and girls, is carefully monitored. Boys' attainment is lower than that of girls but all make good progress from their starting points. One of the reasons for the school's success is the careful use of assessment to meet children's needs. Those from minority ethnic groups achieve well because assessment is used efficiently to support learning. Those using English as an additional language make good progress in speaking and writing. Regular meetings are held between senior leaders and staff to determine how to extend children's learning and progress. Thorough discussions about children who seem to be underachieving take place to establish what extra support would be valuable. Senior leaders are beginning to evaluate rigorously the amount of value added to children's learning.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Developing children's healthy lifestyles is a high priority for the school's leaders. Consequently, the children are encouraged extremely well to eat a balanced diet and to keep fit. At the beginning of every session, children take part in a superb range of exercises which develop their physical and concentration skills. They enjoy learning to grow plants and are keen to use the outside areas. Discussions enable children to learn successfully how to keep themselves safe inside and outside the school. Children's personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They learn to reflect with sensitivity on their own and others' feelings. This is because staff are responsive to how important children's well-being is to their learning and monitor it extremely carefully. Children learn the importance of sharing because staff use discussion times efficiently. Attendance is good and children have positive attitudes to learning. They behave well because staff and leaders manage them considerately but firmly. Children add to the school community effectively but their contribution to the local community is not as well established.

## Quality of provision

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

#### Grade: 2

Children achieve well in their learning throughout the school mostly because they are well taught. Strong aspects of teaching include the thoughtful use of questioning so that children learn to think deeply about what they are learning. In a good session observed, expert questioning ensured children developed their thinking skills in a wide variety of ways. For example, they were asked, 'How do we get the object over that gap?' and encouraged to suggest their own ideas for creating a bridge. Teaching develops children's creativity successfully. In a good session seen, children learned to move imaginatively as they pretended to fly like a butterfly when the member of staff used resources, including music, very creatively. Occasionally, staff do not explain to children effectively what they have done well and could do to improve their learning. Children's involvement in key activities is not always recorded successfully and so it is not easy to know who has not yet developed a key skill.

Good opportunities are planned for all areas of learning. An effective balance is in place between adult led activities and those which children select for themselves. Children's language development is given a high priority and staff spend much time talking to them and extending their vocabulary. Effective support for those children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with additional needs in speech and language or social and communication enables them to make good progress. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world are given a high priority in planning. Visitors from different backgrounds comprehensively develop children's understanding of a diverse range of cultures. For example, children learn about Eid and Christmas successfully because visitors talk to them about these celebrations.

### Effectiveness in promoting children's welfare

#### Grade: 1

Children's welfare is promoted outstandingly well, and so they are confident to go to any member of staff. They develop a strong bond with a particular adult because of excellent organisation and established routines. Children are extremely well cared for whether they are in the classrooms or in the outside area. They are kept safe and policies are followed well. Safeguarding procedures meet all requirements. The children are also kept safe when they use information and communication technology. Those whose well-being is a concern are supported thoughtfully by staff, including a play therapist. The results of occasional accidents are handled very well because many staff have completed training in first-aid for children in the Early Years. Risk assessments are carried out rigorously. Children who use English as an additional language are supported successfully. Bilingual staff enable children to make good progress and help them greatly to access all aspects of school life. Childcare supports children's development successfully; the youngest children often learn alongside those in the Nursery classes. At breakfast and lunchtime, children in the childcare setting learn to eat healthily and be independent because of high expectations of the staff. Children move smoothly to primary education because they attend a few sessions at their new school in the term before they transfer.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher and senior leadership team drive development well. In less than a year they have set up a thriving Nursery school and childcare centre. The different areas of learning and approaches to teaching are managed efficiently. Children have equal opportunities because each is treated as an individual. Any barriers to learning are identified quickly and staff work methodically to break them down. The school's leaders work well to unite the community. Many children take part in events, such as raising money for those less fortunate than themselves. They have a good understanding of the different challenges faced by people who do not have a family. The children are well aware of different cultures seen in England and throughout the world. For example, they celebrate Diwali by dressing in Indian clothes and trying festival foods. Children learn thoughtfully about global issues by recycling materials and looking after plants and trees. Many practitioners from early years settings attend training courses on the site successfully. The school has evaluated its work with the community and plans to develop this further. Governance is satisfactory and governors work well with staff, parents and the community. They are beginning to monitor, question and challenge the school's performance increasingly. The school development plan does not set specific objectives against which leaders can readily evaluate success.

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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

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do children in the EYFS achieve?</b>	2
The standards[1] reached by learners	3
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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children?</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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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 effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<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>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
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	2
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	3
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**

26 June 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of The Nottingham Nursery School and Training Centre, Denman Street West, Nottingham, NG7 3AB

Thank you for helping me to find out about your school. I enjoyed watching sessions 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 learning
- you concentrate and behave well in sessions
- you really enjoy all the things you do at school
- you develop healthy lifestyles very well
- 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
- a very good partnership is in place between the school, your parents and others
- the staff care for you very well and listen to you thoughtfully

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

- make sure that you understand better what you have done well and you could do to improve
- improve the way that staff record whether you have completed a learning activity
- develop the ways governors are involved in watching over the school and improvement planning

Keep listening carefully to staff comments and enjoy all the wonderful things you are learning at The Nottingham Nursery School and Training Centre.

Yours faithfully

Jackie Cousins

Lead inspector