

Newtown Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103141
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	336017
Inspection dates	18–19 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Clive Lewis

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	88
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Monica Campbell
Headteacher	Mr Roger Redgrave
Date of previous school inspection	3 May 2007
School address	Hockley Close Newtown West Midlands
Telephone number	0121 359 2476
Fax number	0121 333 6595
Email address	head@newtownn.bham.sch.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Approximately 40% of time was spent looking directly at learning in eight sessions. All four full-time and part-time teachers and all support staff were seen working with children. Inspectors observed the school's work and the pre-school provision, which is managed by the governing body. Meetings were held with staff and governors and the inspectors spoke to a number of parents as they were bringing their children to school or collecting them at the end of the day. Inspectors looked at children's profiles, curriculum plans, assessment and tracking data and the school development plan, and scrutinised 62 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well leaders monitor the provision to ensure that all children reach their full potential
- how well the different needs and abilities of all groups of children are catered for
- how well children are encouraged to learn about other communities that are different from their own.

Information about the school

Newtown Nursery is a city centre school. Children come from a very wide range of cultural, social and economic backgrounds. The proportion of children from minority ethnic backgrounds is very high and a large proportion of children entering the Nursery are at the early stages of learning English or have special educational needs relating to maturity of communication, speech and language.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Newtown Nursery provides an outstanding education for its children. Children achieve very well from starting points that are generally well below expected levels. By the time that they leave to join their Reception classes in a number of schools, they are confident and independent learners. The Nursery has an overwhelming atmosphere of care, nurture and support in which all the children thrive. Each child is fully included in what is offered and they, and their parents and carers, are cared for as individuals. The school plays a central part within the community and is greatly valued by parents and carers. Children love the Nursery; they have highly positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is excellent. Because their welfare is exceptionally well provided for, they flourish in the very secure and safe environment. Parents are unanimous in saying that they are happy with their children's experience at the school and that their children enjoy school. One parent wrote, 'Newtown Nursery School is a wonderful environment for children to learn and grow.'

Each day, children thoroughly enjoy a wide and highly varied range of carefully planned and exciting activities, both indoors and out. These encourage the children to learn and develop exceptionally well. The staff are always at hand to promote learning further by showing children how to draw the very best from the exciting activities.

The headteacher's thoughtful, inspirational and wise leadership and management continue to underpin the success of the Nursery. There is accurate and rigorous evaluation of all aspects of the school's provision and performance. This leads to actions that are well considered and effective in seeking to refine provision. He is supported exceptionally well by a very strong and experienced team of teachers and practitioners and each one makes a valuable contribution to the development and success of the school. Senior leaders, along with all members of staff, rigorously evaluate their own performance as well as that of the school generally. Community cohesion, though promoted strongly within the school, in the immediate locality and to some extent beyond, has been identified as an area for improvement, so that children understand more clearly what life is like for children in different situations to their own. The school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis and the school's track record in maintaining outstanding effectiveness since its last inspection demonstrates that it has excellent capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Help children develop a sense of what life is like for people who have different lifestyles by extending links with communities further from the school, particularly

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

overseas.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

1

Children run eagerly into the Nursery each morning, demonstrating clearly how much they enjoy coming to school. They play happily on their own or with others and children from different cultures and backgrounds play together harmoniously. Children are very active learners and are given a wide range of opportunities to explore and investigate both within the Nursery classrooms and in the highly stimulating and secure outdoor environment. They are keen to learn and a very high priority is given to developing their English skills through well-planned and well-supported speaking and listening activities. All adults pay close attention to children's individual needs and quickly identify those who may show a delay in learning. They provide appropriate support through the excellent links they have with external health agencies. This ensures that those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their classmates. By the time children move to their Reception classes in a range of local schools, their skills have improved significantly and are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Given their very low starting points, this equates to excellent progress overall.

Children are happy and secure, and attendance levels, although inevitably affected to some extent by the childhood illnesses many have at this age, are good. Visitors from within the community, such as the police, teach the children about staying safe. Children take excellent care of the Nursery environment and treat each other with care and sensitivity. They are involved in making their daily snacks of fruit and this enables them to learn about the importance of leading healthy lifestyles. Continuous opportunities to play outside strengthen their physical development. Most children behave exceptionally well and the few minor squabbles that occur, mainly over learning to share, are quickly resolved by the attentive adults on hand to mediate. Children know who to go to if they have a problem and that adults will sort it out. They make good progress in their social, physical, creative and problem-solving skills because staff plan good opportunities for them to investigate and explore. Such activities prepare them well for the future.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate	
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment ¹	3
The quality of children's learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
Children's behaviour	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Children's attendance ¹	2
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The outstanding interaction between all staff and children, combined with the extremely well thought-out organisation of the accommodation, curriculum and choice of resources, ensure that all aspects of the provision are of exceptionally high quality. The excellent ratio of adults to children ensures that individual learning needs are consistently met. Adults know the children and families very well. Regular observations by staff inform them about children's particular interests and their achievements. All adults contribute to daily assessments which build into a comprehensive picture of each child's development in different strands of learning. These observations and assessments are used exceptionally well to plan ever more challenging tasks. Adults have very high expectations of children's capabilities and they direct their praise precisely so that children understand what is meant by 'good listening' or 'good sharing'. They are imaginative in planning activities and adept at capitalising on every opportunity for learning. They are skilled at intervening at appropriate moments to ask open questions which prompt children to think. The main focus is on promoting learning through first-hand experience. A rich and creative mix of activities, visits and visitors, many of which also include parents and carers so that they are helped to expand their understanding of how they can engage in their children's education, provide children with memorable experiences and a thirst for learning. The combination of independent choice for a wide range of interesting and challenging activities and adult-led sessions ensure that basic skills in all areas of learning are promoted most effectively.

Early identification of individuals' needs and very close working with outside agencies mean that children receive first-rate support to help them thrive. Parents and carers of

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

children with medical problems appreciate greatly the high levels of care their children receive. Staff excel at building up a comprehensive picture of each child in their care.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The long-standing headteacher is very well respected and valued within the community. He leads a very strong team of highly committed staff who all show a strong commitment to equality and diversity, celebrating the individual qualities of each child and their family very well. Teamwork is strong and sophisticated monitoring and evaluation procedures successfully drive improvement. The governing body have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors are very supportive of the school and are effective in holding it to account. There is a close partnership with parents and carers who are rightly effusive in their comments about how they are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. These very strong links with parents ensure the personal needs of the children are addressed extremely well. Resources are very well deployed and the school provides excellent value for money. Safeguarding procedures are excellent, policies are comprehensive and procedures ensure children are protected and supported very effectively. There are very strong links with a wide range of external agencies which contribute well to children's progress. The ethnic and cultural diversity of families is celebrated and community cohesion is promoted very strongly within the school community and to some extent beyond the immediate locality. However, the school's action plan highlights the need to further promote community cohesion with communities beyond the school, particularly those outside the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

There was a very positive response to the Ofsted questionnaire, reflecting the excellent relationships the school has with parents and carers. An exceptionally high proportion of parents and carers responded, so that inspectors received more questionnaires back than there are children at the Nursery. The overwhelming majority of parents agreed with all of the statements and, when asked if their child enjoys school, whether the school keeps their child safe, if their child makes enough progress, whether the school helps them to support their child and if they are happy with their child's experiences at the school, 100% agreed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Newtown Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 62 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 88 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	82	11	18	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	53	85	9	15	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	43	69	16	26	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	71	18	29	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	45	73	16	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	43	69	19	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	71	16	26	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	44	71	16	26	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	63	21	34	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	65	21	34	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	43	69	16	26	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	49	79	12	19	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	52	84	10	16	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its children. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well children acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



22 March 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Newtown Nursery School, Newtown, B19 2NS

Thank you all very much for making me feel so welcome. I really enjoyed coming to your nursery and finding out about all the exciting things that you do and how well you all learn together. I agree with you and your parents that Newtown is an outstanding nursery and I can understand why you are all so happy there. The grown-ups look after you really well. Your headteacher has managed to make sure that your school continues to be an excellent one and he is helped greatly by all the staff who are very good at planning things for you to do that help you to learn new things very quickly.

I saw you busily working, playing and learning lots of exciting new things. I was also pleased to see how you do 'good listening' and 'good sharing' almost all the time so that everybody can join in the fun. You are learning lots of new things every day. You are especially good at doing things for yourselves and playing nicely with other children. Your behaviour is excellent and you get on very well together. You have lots of places to run around and explore in your outside area, as well as places to grow plants and practise your writing. It is good that your parents and carers have lots of chances to learn new things too, so that you can have fun together at home as well as at Nursery. I think all of you need to give yourselves a pat on the back for working and playing together so well.

Even when a school is as good as yours is, there is always a way to make it even better. I have asked the grown-ups to help you find out more about people from places much further away from your school, so you can begin to understand how they live and the problems they might face.

Yours sincerely

Clive Lewis

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.