

South Normanton Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112484
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	337945
Inspection dates	1–2 March 2010
Reporting inspector	David Speakman

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	89
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Wendy Comins
Headteacher	Ms Angela Colmar
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Half the time was spent looking at learning; nine lessons were observed and inspectors observed all teachers. Meetings were held with the senior leadership team, governors and all staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at policies and documents relating to safeguarding, healthy and safety, behaviour and first aid. Inspectors scrutinised assessment data, curriculum planning and the nursery's plans for learning. Forty five parental questionnaires were analysed.

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

- how well the headteacher, governors and staff have maintained and further developed the high-quality provision seen at the previous inspection
- how assessment data is used to confirm standards at the end of the nursery and to demonstrate the achievement of different groups of children
- the impact of initiatives of leaders and managers on the quality and effectiveness of the performance of all staff.

Information about the school

South Normanton Nursery School provides 40 full-time equivalent places for children aged three and four. Children attend half- or full-day sessions, generally for 15 hours a week. There is some flexibility for individual attendance arrangements. The nursery is over subscribed and there is usually a long waiting list. Since the previous inspection there has been a complete change in the teaching staff. A new headteacher and a full-time teacher joined the nursery staff and a part-time teacher has recently joined. The nursery maintains close working relations with the neighbouring children's centre, which is subject to different inspection. The nursery has Health Promoting School status, ECO Bronze Award and the Basic Skills quality mark.

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

South Normanton Nursery School continues to provide an outstanding quality of education and an excellent start to children's education. Since the previous inspection and a change in leadership, staff have maintained the outstanding quality reported then and have very effectively continued to further develop the nursery's provision. Leaders and managers constantly seek the very best for children and teamwork amongst the whole staff is very strong. Leaders and governors support all staff effectively in taking up professional development so they are all knowledgeable in their own particular area of responsibility. The capacity to sustain further improvement is outstanding.

Children make outstanding progress in all areas of learning. A minority of children enter nursery at a starting point lower expected for their age. However, most are working at or beyond expectations for children of this age when they are ready to move onto their infant schools. Because some children start from a lower base with their communication skills, fewer reach the highest levels of attainment in reading, writing and calculation. Even so, progress is rapid and comments such as: 'My son has already shown progress in all areas of his development in the short time since he started in January 2010', accurately reflect the views of the very large majority of parents.

Children's personal and social development is a strength. Behaviour is excellent and children are very happy to learn and play alongside other children, forming very secure relationships. They know how well they are expected to behave and what is unacceptable behaviour. Children grow to appreciate kindness from each other and from the staff. Forest School activities effectively help children relate to each other, discover their own identity and appreciate nature. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Attendance is excellent and children are exceptionally happy to come to the nursery. All parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed. One parent reported that her child 'gets very upset at the weekend because he can't go to the nursery.'

These outstanding outcomes are a result of the excellent quality of education provided at South Normanton. Teaching is outstanding and activities are planned so that each child builds on previous learning. Activities ensure that all children experience all areas of learning and a balance of inside and outdoor learning. The outdoor and indoor environments are equally stimulating and provide a wealth of interesting opportunities. The curriculum is outstanding; it provides exceptionally well for individual needs. Curriculum development is innovative and community cohesion is promoted exceptionally well within the curriculum. Children learn to appreciate 'who they are as a person.' This is extended very well to enable children to start to appreciate differences between other cultures from a very early age and to understand that we are all

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different. This knowledge and understanding is beginning to be used as an opportunity to help children develop their reading, writing and calculation skills but this not fully developed. Additionally, there is a wealth of enriching activities, such as Forest Schools, Philosophy for Children and Positive Play, all of which promote high levels of interest and enthusiasm for learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed recently created local, national and international links to further raise children's awareness of the world in which they live, linking this to the continued development of their reading, writing and calculation skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

1

Children make outstanding progress from their starting points and by the time they reach the end of their time in the nursery, the majority are working at levels that are above those nationally expected for their ages in most aspects of their learning. Staff ensure that all children are supported so that all groups achieve equally well. Detailed assessment information shows exceptional achievement for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Those learning English as a second language and children capable of excelling, are exceptionally well catered for and make excellent progress.

Children adopt healthy eating and take part in lots of physical activity. Their preferences for snacks include bananas, cucumber, peppers and milk. They have an exceptional understanding, for such a young age, of what contributes to healthy living. Children feel very secure in the nursery and responses to the parents' questionnaire are unanimous that this is the case. Children look after each other very well and, if ever concerned about something, they know who to ask for help. In this way children make an excellent contribution to the daily life in the nursery. They also help set out activities and clear up at the end of sessions. The preparation for the next stages of their education is excellent. In addition to good literacy and numeracy skills, children are excellent at showing independence and show initiative when playing or working in teams. They have exceptionally good thinking skills and show expertise at using information and communications technology equipment, including digital cameras and computers.

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.

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Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment ¹	2
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	1
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The planning of learning activities is outstanding. Assessment procedures are very well organised and give a full picture of each child's current attainment levels and their progress. Assessment information is used exceptionally well in planning the next steps in learning for each child. It is also used to make sure that each child experiences a balanced set of learning opportunities. Any gaps in assessment information indicate where children may have missed out on learning experiences. This information is then used in planning subsequent learning to compensate for missed opportunities. In this way each child has a very well balanced curriculum experience. The nursery curriculum is exceptionally well planned. There are opportunities for children to learn across all six areas, both inside and outdoors. Teachers have made sure that the quality of outdoor provision matches that inside. As well as free flow activities allowing children to choose, more formal teacher-led learning takes place in groups. Activities in group work are matched very well to individual needs and promote very effectively skills such as thinking skills, that will be of significant use to children in their current and subsequent learning. Staff are proficient at delivering this exceptionally rich curriculum. They know each child well and support individual needs very effectively. All staff show a deep understanding of how young children learn through play and are skilled at turning all activities into learning situations. In this way learning is exceptionally enjoyable. Although adults are constantly present, they know when to step back to enable children to grow in independence. Care and support shown for all children is exceptional and is fundamental to the overall provision. Safeguarding, health and safety and child protection procedures are fully in place and are implemented with the greatest of care.

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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?

Since joining the school, the headteacher has been highly effective in strengthening teamwork so that all staff are valued for their contributions. The senior leadership team's expectations of staff's performance are very high. Teaching is monitored robustly, feedback is given and staff use this to ensure they are giving of their best. All staff have a shared determination to achieve excellence and a pride in what they do. This is shared by the governing body. Since the previous inspection governance has improved significantly. The governors now have a key role in implementing monitoring and evaluation procedures and have close links with key staff and with those responsible for major developments at any time. They are reviewing their own work systematically to identify where they themselves can improve. The impact of the nursery's partnerships with other settings and schools, with external agencies and with parents and carers is excellent. They are highly focused on smooth transition, ensuring high-quality learning and well-being and supporting all children as needed. Equality is important to the running of nursery and all children are provided with equal challenge and opportunity. The nursery promotes community cohesion exceptionally well. The senior leaders and governors audit this provision carefully and make sure that local, national and international links help children develop excellent community awareness.

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
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1

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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	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents have very positive views of the nursery and appreciate what it is doing for their children. Many comments accompanying the inspection questionnaire remark on how happy children are, that they make rapid progress in a short period of time and that children are gaining confidence quickly. They like the range of activities, including those for learning out of doors. A small number of parents/carers are not happy that some children only have 12 hours nursery provision each week. Discussion with the headteacher gives justifiable reasons for this; the nursery is oversubscribed, there is a great demand for places and limited space. Other comments indicate that some of these parents are pleased to have four sessions in the week. Inspectors do not agree with this concern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at South Normanton 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 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 89 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	78	10	22	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	82	8	18	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	62	14	31	3	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	67	11	24	2	4	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	31	69	12	27	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	69	12	27	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	69	14	31	0	0	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)	27	60	12	27	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	67	12	27	3	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	69	13	29	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	67	12	27	2	4	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	33	73	10	22	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	80	8	18	1	2	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.



3 March 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of South Normanton Nursery School, Derbyshire, DE55 2JB

Thank you very much for showing us how well you are all doing at South Normanton Nursery School. Your nursery is outstanding and your teachers and nursery team make sure that you have the very best start to your education.

You are really keen to take part in all activities and enjoy learning in nursery and outside in your fantastic nursery garden. You are sensible and well behaved and we are very pleased to see how well everyone works and plays together.

The nursery team makes sure that all the activities that you take part in are excellent and they help you make the best progress.

Your nursery is very well led and Angela and Ruth are always looking for areas for further improvement. We have agreed with them to continue to develop links with other schools and communities and use these links to further develop your skills.

Staff, children and parents think that South Normanton Nursery School is a very special place. We agree and really enjoyed our visit.

We wish you all the very best and hope you are able to use what South Normanton is doing for you as you get older.

Yours sincerely

David Speakman

Lead inspector

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