

Flatts Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107592
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	309441
Inspection dates	3–4 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Jane Hughes

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	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	90
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Nottingham
Headteacher	Mrs Julie Helm
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2005
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Ashworth Green Dewsbury West Yorkshire WF13 2SU
Telephone number	01924 325290
Fax number	01924 325290

Age group	3–5
Inspection dates	3–4 December 2008
Inspection number	309441

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This large nursery draws children from an area of considerable economic and social disadvantage. Two children in three are of Asian heritage while the remaining third are White British. A far higher than average proportion of children speaks English as an additional language and are at the very early stages of learning English when they join the school. Most children speak Punjabi, Urdu or Gujarati at home. The school receives funding through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) for some bilingual staffing. The school admits children in September, January and April each year. A few children in the main nursery have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school receives additional local authority funding for resourced provision for up to 12 children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who attend for half-day sessions. They work in their own room for part of a session but are integrated into the main school as much as possible. Some of the extensive school grounds have been developed into a 'forest school'. The school has achieved several awards including Investors in People and Healthy Schools.

The school has undergone a rapid succession of changes fundamental to its organisation and operation in the last five years. Originally designated a Surestart Children's Centre in June 2005, it was re-designated in April 2008 as a Link Children's Centre site and is now known as Flatts and Eastborough Children's Centre. It offers year-round childcare to local families from 08.00 to 18.00. This setting was not part of the inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Flatts Nursery is an outstanding school. Parents sum up the high quality early education experiences it provides with comments such as, 'The staff are willing to try anything to make sure my child's nursery days are happy days.' As a result, children amass an impressive range of memorable learning experiences during their time here. They move on to full-time schooling well primed for future success as curious, kind and positive citizens. The school encourages children, their parents and local families to value lifelong learning and to achieve as well as possible. Improved monitoring, evaluation and use of data, in particular, since the last inspection ensure that the leadership has a very accurate view of the school, even though this is modestly expressed. First-class leadership by the headteacher and assistant headteacher avoids complacency and constantly seeks to improve current practice. Supportive governors show loyalty and commitment to children, families and staff, although they do not yet offer enough challenge to the school's leadership. Current successes, excellent teamwork among all the staff, innovative practice and the desire to do better, combine to illustrate the school's outstanding capacity to improve.

The school's overriding intention is for children to uncover, 'the joy of discovery through play, talk and first-hand sensory experiences'. Without doubt, the school fulfils this aim as adults offer children limitless, daily opportunities to make decisions, explore and solve problems. Skilful staff transform children into increasingly confident and independent learners. Children learn and develop exceptionally well through stimulating play, talk and valuable first-hand experiences. Adults nurture and support rather than direct children's learning. This ensures that children develop into increasingly independent learners who can make decisions and organise themselves well, key attributes for their future success and well-being. Bilingual staff provide timely interventions throughout each session so that the many children who are at the very early stages of learning to speak English experience the security of learning in their home language. This helps them to make faster progress and to settle in without fuss. Adults create a welcoming and secure environment where children's welfare is paramount. Parents confirm that, 'The whole experience puts the child at the centre.' Staff carefully track children's emotional health and this innovative practice adds to children's excellent personal development and well-being. Exemplary attitudes, behaviour and relationships are at the heart of everything children achieve here. They develop the basic skills and personal attributes necessary for future success, an understanding of the key principles of safe and healthy living, along with evident enjoyment of purposeful learning, work and play as part of a larger community.

Children's achievement is outstanding. Most children arrive with low skills, very low in communication, language and literacy. Consistently first-class provision for children's learning and development ensures that children make the fastest progress possible, although standards are generally below those expected for children their age by the time they move to primary school. A small number of higher attaining children reach some of the standards expected for their age. Children make significant progress in their knowledge of the English language and this helps them to settle in well and make a good start to the next phase in their learning. A key element in this success is the seamless link between learning inside and outdoors. Both learning environments challenge and enthuse children, particularly the boys, who prefer to learn and play outdoors. Parents particularly appreciate the support and care given to children in the resourced provision who have significant learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They

benefit enormously from mixing daily with the other children, using the extensive outdoor environment and also spending time in their own area.

There are first-class links for nursery children's parents with the children's centre, managed by the headteacher and governors, in terms of partnerships with health professionals, adult education and community relations. The leadership has made the extended provision as flexible as possible to cater for the needs of parents who work or study outside the home, improving their life chances.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the levels of challenge governors offer the school's leadership.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children join the school with skills well below those typical for their age, particularly their social, communication and mathematical skills. Many have a limited awareness of the world beyond their family although their physical development is stronger and this remains so throughout their time at nursery. Children make outstanding progress regardless of their backgrounds or abilities as a direct result of very high quality provision. Each child is treated as an individual and planned learning activities meet all children's needs exceptionally well. As a result, standards have risen in the school's focus areas of communication, language and literacy, and problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. Although most children's skills are still below those expected for their age by the time they leave the nursery for Reception classes in other schools, they make excellent progress, particularly in their personal and social skills. Children are keen, curious and determined learners. A small number of higher attaining children reach the standards expected for their age. Children in the resourced provision make very small but nonetheless important steps in their development because of excellent support from skilled staff, clearly focused learning programmes and highly effective partnerships with external agencies.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children make the most of every minute they spend here. Parents typically comment, 'My child always looks forward to nursery and comes home all happy and enthusiastic.' Most parents bring their children to school regularly and children arrive with a spring in their step. Children's exemplary behaviour underpins their first-class personal development as they follow the fine examples set by adults. High quality relationships permeate nursery life. Children lap up opportunities to chat to adults, either in their home language or in English. They become adept at choosing how and where to spend their time because such decisions are second nature to them here. Boys, in particular, develop a love of learning through the myriad practical activities on offer. They readily exploit any spontaneous challenges or opportunities. For example, they revelled in the sudden snowfall to work together to build a snowman, deciding how best to fix on the carrot nose. Rich experiences, including many magical times spent in the forest school, result in children's outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children learn well from each other's first-hand experience of diversity in Britain and the wider world. They treat each other with respect and persevere with tasks. These positive characteristics, coupled with impressive gains in their basic skills, ensure that children develop a very secure foundation for future learning and success.

Quality of provision

Effectiveness in promoting children's learning and development

Grade: 1

Parents confirm that typically, 'My child comes home and tells me about the wonderful things she has learned today.' All children make excellent progress because adults are so aware of their individual learning needs. They use all the information they gather about each child to move their learning forward with just the right level of challenge so all children remain interested but not overwhelmed. Staff constantly watch what children do, listening carefully to their responses when questioned or when talking among themselves, and they record the key features so that next time each child will move on from an identified starting point. Staff have embraced the spirit of the new EYFS curriculum, incorporating previously innovative practice. Excellent provision extends seamlessly from indoors to outside and children choose where to work, whatever the weather. All children, including from the resourced provision, benefit from their regular visits to the 'forest school'. Joint parent and child outdoor learning adventures are also held in the 'forest'. Everyone experiences new challenges together and such first-class partnerships with parents promote children's effective learning. Adults build children's confidence successfully so they know that their views are important.

Effectiveness in promoting children's welfare

Grade: 1

Children flourish here whatever their background or individual needs because their welfare is at the centre of everything the school strives towards. Parents comment, 'My child feels safe, secure and very settled here,' and children's obvious contentment shines through all they do. Appropriate safeguarding, safety and health procedures are in place. The school is very responsive to parental concerns. Children enjoy learning about safe and healthy practices as they prepare and eat nutritious snacks or practise using tools and equipment, both inside and outdoors. The outdoor area is extensive, well resourced and provides children with daily opportunities to be adventurous under close adult supervision. This is one of the key features that attracts parents to the school, particularly as many children do not have access to large outdoor spaces at home. The school works very well with parents, carers and other organisations to help children achieve as well as possible. Excellent links with daycare staff bring additional security to children and their parents. The school promotes attendance well and makes good use of extended services such as pre-school provision to engage more children and parents in the important routines of school life. Children in the resourced provision benefit from very effective external expertise as well as in-house skilled provision so that they come to school happily and spend their days immersed in beneficial activities with their peers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher is a highly effective leader who constantly seeks new ways to improve the school. Staff are reflective practitioners who continue to further their own professional development. Coordinators for different areas of learning are well informed, monitor provision closely and fulfil their responsibilities very effectively. There is a wealth of high quality information available for parents about what their children are learning and how well they

progress. Much of this is recorded in children's well presented individual 'learning journey' records. The school enjoys a strong reputation locally and offers, in tandem with the children's centre, access to health and education support for local families. Leaders are associated with a wide variety of local initiatives and organisations that develop strong links with the community and so promote community cohesion extremely well. Staff form a cohesive and highly adaptable team. They work well together to meet children's and families' needs. Governors are very committed to the school and provide good support. Even so, they do not yet provide sufficient challenge to the school in terms of moving provision on still further. The school runs smoothly day to day because of efficient work by administrators, lunchtime and ancillary staff.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	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

Achievement and standards

How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
The standards[1] reached by learners	3
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

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children?	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	3
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 effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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?	1
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**

I liked every minute I spent in your excellent school. I have written a little story for you about what I saw J. Perhaps your teachers will read it to you and translate it if you don't understand all of it!

At the end of the road, up a hill, there is a very happy Nursery. It's Flatts Nursery! Your Nursery! The children are very friendly. They love school. They smile a lot. They learn lots of fun facts every day. The children do very, very, VERY well at Flatts because the teachers plan exciting activities. Rooms are bursting with beautiful displays and books full of children's work. The children are superb at choosing where to play and what to learn. They love learning outside with all the fun equipment or in their special forest school. They really like looking at the birds and going for walks in that magical place. They know that exercise like pedalling bikes or walking, and eating healthy snacks like melon in the Caf, bar, are very good for them. The children help each other a lot. They also like to help families who live nearby and this makes the people who live there very happy too. Some special, busy people, called governors, help to run the Nursery with the super headteacher and staff. In future, they are going to ask even more questions about how well all of the children, and the school, are doing. THE END.

I hope you liked my little story. Did you pick out some of the things you do at Nursery? Perhaps some of you might like to draw pictures to go with the story because you are very good at drawing.

Carry on having fun and learning lots of new things in the forest!