

Central Community Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112472
Local Authority	Derby
Inspection number	337941
Inspection dates	16–17 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Judith Charlesworth

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	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Wren
Headteacher	Clare Cossor
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2007
School address	43 Nuns Street Derby Derbyshire DE1 3LR
Telephone number	01332 342647
Fax number	
Email address	admin@central.derby.sch.uk

Age group	3–5Error! Reference source not found.
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited four lessons and observed various staff-supported free play sessions and before- and after-school care. They held meetings with governors, staff and a representative of the local authority, and talked informally with children and parents. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents including children's performance data and records of progress, curriculum planning, school policies, communications with parents and minutes of meetings. Twenty seven parents' inspection questionnaires were returned and analysed.

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

- the systems for assessing and tracking children's developing skills, and how well the information gained is used to help children learn
- the effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its duties
- how well the school works to support the local and wider community
- how any weaknesses in teaching and the curriculum are identified, and what the school is doing to improve them.

Information about the school

Central Community nursery is a small school situated close to the centre of Derby. In April 2007, the nursery was designated part of the West End Children's Centre which provides for families with children from birth to five years. Sixteen nursery school places are designated for care and operate on an extended day for 48 weeks a year. The nursery also provides before- and after-school care for about a quarter of its children. Children attend the nursery to suit their needs, ranging from one or two half-day sessions per week to full time in an extended day. The nursery is resourced to provide for children with visual impairment, and its specialist facilities are used by other agencies. There are currently eight children with significant special educational needs and disabilities including profound hearing loss, visual impairment and severe and complex learning difficulties. The great majority of children are from White British backgrounds, with a small number from other ethnic groups, the most prevalent being Eastern European. Children generally spend three, four or five terms at the nursery according to their age, as the great majority leave to enter the Reception classes of local primary schools at the start of the autumn term. The head teacher has been in post for one year.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Children make a good start to their education at the nursery and they learn and achieve well. Their personal, social and emotional needs are very well addressed. By the time they start nursery, many children are already very familiar with the premises and staff because they have participated in sessions run by the Children's Centre, or attended the nursery's own playgroup. This helps them to settle quickly and start to learn and enjoy themselves. The school's outstanding partnerships with parents and other agencies are also underpinned by this pre-school work. Inspection questionnaire returns show that all parents are happy with the school and the positive effect it has on their children.

The nursery is bright, interesting and very well organised and equipped. Consequently, children feel safe, understand what is required of them and can choose freely from a wealth of interesting and exciting things to do. The outside area includes various different environments, and is very well used to provide additional activities in all curriculum areas. Careful planning ensures that there are clear learning objectives for each activity in all areas of learning, and that the whole child's needs are addressed. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example, is as robustly addressed as the curricular areas of learning. Each child is looked upon as a unique individual. Within the wider nursery group, children are generally given the support and challenge to suit their particular needs, based on effective, wide-ranging assessment and progress tracking systems. Occasionally, however, the specified needs of individual higher attaining children are not completely met. Nevertheless, teaching is good and care, guidance and support for the children are outstanding. Staff support ranges from direct teaching to skilled interactions which help the children make the most of, and learn from, their activities and experiences. Support for children with special educational needs and disabilities and the relationships between staff and children are outstanding. These contribute significantly to children's good progress and personal development.

The ambition and drive of the headteacher is being successfully embedded. Staff morale is high and questionnaires show staff are happy with the direction the school is taking. Clear development plans support improvement and senior staff are learning to take a more strategic view of the school's work. Governance, however, lags a little behind. The governing body meets all statutory requirements and members understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, some members are insufficiently involved in school self-evaluation, monitoring and evaluating the ongoing work of the school and setting plans for improvement. Nevertheless, much

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change and improvement has been achieved in one year. Relationships within the Children's Centre, community and local authority have improved. Self-evaluation is effective and senior leaders have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are effective in bringing about improvement by following through clearly articulated plans to strengthen performance. New assessment, progress tracking and performance management systems to support children's achievement have been successfully implemented and are having good results. These successful developments and good development plans demonstrate that the school has good capacity for further sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school by:
 - improving members' involvement in school self-evaluation and setting priorities for improvement
 - increasing members' ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and the impact of improvements implemented.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

2

Children very much enjoy the nursery and attendance is good. Many children have 100% attendance, and absence is generally due to illness. Children separate readily from their parents and are keen to see the enticing activities that have been prepared for them. Those who arrive for breakfast or stay for tea have the benefit of individual attention and conversation with a designated member of staff. This helps them feel settled and gives them a good start and end to the day. The children make healthy food choices and quickly adapt to the nursery's clear hygiene routines. The richly resourced outdoor area provides opportunities for extensive physical activity and for learning about the wonders of the natural world, both of which children enjoy. Children trust the adults who look after them and parents say their children feel safe in school.

Children's social development is good. They develop a sense of right and wrong and are generally companionable and kind to one another. Children know how to behave and to listen to one another in groups. They learn to wait their turn and to collaborate on tasks. For example, when looking for bugs in the garden, one child used the magnifying glass while the other 'made notes' on a clipboard. Children often choose to play in pairs or little groups, regardless of gender or ethnicity, and those with special educational needs and disabilities are included without question. Displays and records show that children enjoy learning about and celebrating events that derive from world-wide cultures. They understand that there are others less fortunate than themselves, and enjoy helping them by fund-raising activities such as 'pyjama day' for Red Nose day.

The children's curiosity, interest and motivation to succeed help them learn

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effectively. Some show a particular thirst for learning and real imagination and creativity in their play and choice of activities. For example, one little boy carefully chose some musical instruments and sat happily on his own playing them in perfect time to pre-recorded music.

Assessment information shows that most children enter the nursery with skills that are below expectations for their age. However, by the time they leave, performance data shows that they have made good progress and the majority are working securely within, and some above expected levels for their age. Children with special educational needs and disabilities make good progress against the personal targets set on their education plans. The data does not show any discernible difference in progress between boys and girls or those from minority backgrounds, and children from these groups are identified on the higher attainers' register. Children make particularly good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. However, progress in early literacy and numeracy skills tends to be slower than other areas of learning. This is currently being addressed and predictions indicate improvement in attainment and progress in these areas. The children's good personal development and academic progress prepare them well for their future education and well-being.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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	2
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
Children's behaviour	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Children's attendance ¹	2
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of provision is underpinned by outstanding support, care and guidance

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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for children and their parents. This begins when children are babies, through the work of the Children's Centre, and the caring, nurturing ethos is very effectively continued by the school. Collaborative working between the two 'wings' of the provision is outstanding. Parents say they and their children are very well supported when joining and moving on from the nursery, and that communication with staff is easy and helpful. The leadership team has worked hard to maintain a safe 'open door' for parents. Staff are always available in the entrance hall to meet, greet and pass messages to parents as they deliver and collect their children. The school is vigilant to trends of poor attendance, and involves the education welfare service if necessary.

The curriculum provides a good quality, interesting context for teaching and learning. It has recently been refreshed to meet statutory requirements, make better use of the outdoor area and be responsive to the school's developing analysis of children's performance. As a result of this, for example, the school has recently strengthened its provision for early literacy and numeracy, by including more outdoor activities that support these areas. Planning arrangements increasingly allow activities to stem directly from children's interests and support the development of individuals' skills as they are noted during assessments. For example, the needs of a small group of children to improve their early writing skills were met by adding an 'office' into the imaginary 'travel agent' play area that they particularly enjoy.

The school's managers keep a close eye on the attainment, progress and provision for different groups of children. Children with English as an additional language are given targeted support, as are those identified as higher attaining. The support systems for children with special educational needs and disabilities are outstanding. One parent wrote: 'Staff deal with my child's special educational needs and disabilities exceptionally and joyfully'. These children are included in all the nursery activities and the staff help them to have great fun. Excellent plans set out clearly what the children should learn next and how this should be achieved. Direct teaching usually takes good account of children's individual needs, and additional specialist staff support the children's inclusion very skilfully, for example, by signing support.

Assessment for learning is good. The school uses a wide range of observations to inform records of progress. These are underpinned by portfolios of evidence and an ongoing record of children's developing skills. This information is used to adapt curricular plans and activities to meet individuals' needs and to create next-step targets for learning. Teaching is generally good. Staff motivate and engage the children by their supportive relationships and good use of resources. Realistic expectations of behaviour are clearly outlined. Questioning effectively draws out and extends children's knowledge, and helps staff check on their understanding. Occasionally, however, staff do not take sufficient account of children's individual targets. On one occasion, for example, this led to a higher attaining child asking for more challenging work. Nevertheless, overall, the teaching, curriculum and support systems enable children from all groups to make good progress.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets children’s needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has spearheaded a number of changes to improve its practice. All procedures, practices and policies are being systematically reviewed and updated. As a result, performance management has been strengthened and a renewed focus on children’s achievement is appropriately underpinned by more effective assessment and analysis of their attainment and progress. The organisation of the nursery puts children’s needs at the forefront of all it does. The curriculum has improved and the provision now meets all the learning, development and welfare requirements of the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage. Safeguarding procedures are good and meet all requirements.

The senior leadership team is well established and draws from senior staff across the whole Children’s Centre. This has improved the partnership and seamless, collaborative working practices across the two settings and within the local authority. It is also an important factor in the nursery’s outstanding partnership with parents, carers and external agencies who work collaboratively in support of the children and families in the local community. The nursery actively promotes equal opportunities and has many anti-discriminatory practices. Diversity is celebrated, consultation with parents and staff is good and that with other stakeholders is developing. The senior leadership team is now developing more robust systems to further improve the quality of provision and embed the drive for excellence.

The governing body fulfils its statutory duties. Individual members are visible in the school community and are highly supportive. Members understand the nursery’s main strengths and weaknesses, but some rely too much on the headteacher for such information rather than being systematically involved in evaluating the school and determining plans to improve it. Not all members provide sufficient challenge and critical friendship to give maximum support for the headteacher in securing her ambitions for the nursery and its continuing improvement. This particularly hinders the school’s ability to evaluate the impact of its work.

The nursery has a central place in the community and its practices promote community cohesion well. It is already a resource for children with learning difficulties and disabilities from across Derby City, and a venue for community groups such as Derby Signing Families. The senior leaders have a good understanding of the

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nursery's context in the local and wider community, and are continually extending its work to reach more people in need. For example, it has recently made the toy library more user-friendly and accessible to the community.

The school's budget has been adversely affected by changes to funding and reducing numbers of children. However, various money-saving practices have been implemented, and the school has applied for two large grants. These are being used to improve access for the disabled and parents with prams, and to develop the outside area to enhance the curriculum further. Children's outcomes are good at this school, resources are used well and the nursery provides good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Forty four percent of questionnaires were returned. These show that parents and carers are completely happy with the nursery and there were no dissatisfactions in any of the additional comments made.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Central Community Nursery 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspectors received 27 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 62 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	92	2	8	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	18	67	9	33	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	63	9	33	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	63	10	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	17	63	10	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	67	9	33	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)	16	59	9	33	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	18	62	9	33	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	57	13	48	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	78	6	22	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	23	85	4	15	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 all 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

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.



18 September 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Central Community Nursery, Derby, DE1 3LR

Thank you very much for welcoming me into your school this week. It was lovely to see you learning, playing and enjoying yourselves so much.

I am pleased to see that you are making good progress and are learning to do new things quickly. Some of you had only been to school a few times and you managed really well, because the staff look after each one of you very carefully. They work hard to keep you safe and healthy and to give you lots of interesting things to do. This helps you learn and get ready for moving on to your next school.

I like the way the nursery is arranged so that you can find what you want to play with straight away, and the way that staff change the activities so that you don't get bored with them. You really enjoy the outdoor area, don't you? You are careful with the toys and materials, which means that they last a long time and lots of children can use them. You behave well and are nice to one another. All of this is very good.

The governors are the group of people who help the staff run the school. They often visit the nursery, so I am sure you will know one or two of them. I have asked the governors to get more involved in the school's work, so that they can help it do an even better job in helping you learn and grow up to be happy, healthy, clever children.

Yours sincerely

Judith Charlesworth
Lead inspector

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