

Sawley Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112684
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	325660
Inspection date	20 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Geof Timms

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	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	305
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Byron Gillespie
Headteacher	Mrs Marie Harral
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Wilmot Street Sawley Long Eaton Nottingham Nottinghamshire NG10 3DQ
Telephone number	0115 973 2652

Age group	3–7
Inspection date	20 November 2008
Inspection number	325660

Fax number

0115 972 0124

Age group 3–7

Inspection date 20 November 2008

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the impact of the work of the school improvement team
- the impact of the work to introduce personalised learning
- the provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Evidence was gathered from: a range of local and national data, the information that the school has on tracking pupils' progress, the school self-evaluation form, the school improvement plan and lesson observations. Discussions were held with the headteacher and staff, a member of the governing body and pupils. Parents' questionnaires were analysed and the school's systems for safeguarding pupils were checked. Other aspects were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate within the report.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school. It serves an extended urban area. An average proportion of the pupils is entitled to free school meals. The proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average and very few use English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities is broadly average. Most of these pupils have behavioural, social and emotional difficulties or speech and language difficulties. The EYFS is provided through the 130-place Nursery and two Reception classes. The attainment of children when they start in the Nursery varies, but overall it is often below that expected nationally.

The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Healthy Schools Award. The school is also accredited with the Derbyshire Personalised Learning Award. There is a privately managed before and after-school club off site. The headteacher has been in post since the start of this term but was acting as headteacher prior to her substantive appointment.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school in every way. All aspects of its work are fully focused on doing the best possible for the pupils. Because of this achievement is outstanding and standards attained are often exceptionally high. Much of the success of the school is the result of excellent leadership at all levels, and consistently so over a number of years. The school is not complacent and is always searching for improvement, innovation and new ideas. The governors enthusiastically describe the passion shown by the staff for the school. One parent wrote that her son says about the school, 'It is like going home.' After spending time at Sawley, it is easy to see why he might feel that.

The pupils make outstanding progress from their starting points. In the latest national assessments at the end of Year 2, the standards in reading and writing were exceptionally high. In mathematics, standards were above average. Standards in science were assessed as broadly average and immediately the staff began investigating why they were not higher than that. Following their analysis, they made improvements to the planning and the collection of evidence to support higher levels. This is already having a positive impact on standards in science. The current quality of the work in all subjects, in lessons and in pupils' books, is of a very high standard, neat and well presented and at levels well above those expected for their age. In particular, creative artwork of very high quality is evident throughout the school.

One of the reasons for the high standards is the improvement made to the planning of the curriculum. Year teams of staff plan together in tremendous detail. They plan themes that interest the pupils, and enable them to make excellent links between subjects. Topics always start with pupils deciding, often through mind mapping and discussions with their teacher, what they already know and what they would like to find out. This personalised approach ensures that the pupils find their work interesting and relevant, and they are very clear about the purposes of their learning. Teachers' planning ensures that key skills are always part of the work. Pupils are fully aware of these, can point them out on displays and know exactly what they need to learn next. This work is creating excellent learners, who are independent but able to work well in groups or pairs. They are being exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education. Staff are aware that they now need to review their assessment arrangements to ensure that the progress pupils make in all subjects is as accurately and effectively tracked as it is in reading, writing and mathematics.

All groups of pupils are making equally good progress. The school has developed accurate systems for identifying and providing for those pupils who have particular gifts or talents. The more able pupils are identified in each class, where they often have opportunities to work in small groups with adults on extension and enrichment activities. Those with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, or who have poorly developed speech and language skills, also make outstanding progress. One parent is so pleased with the way the school provides support for her and her child that she wrote, 'I cannot praise them all enough!'

The links made between subjects extend beyond the curriculum and influence pupils' outstanding personal development. In one example, pupils demonstrated their excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe from fire by showing how they had learned this while studying the Great Fire of London. In Year 1, pupils showed exceptional enjoyment in making sandwiches, working with huge smiles and great concentration. This also illustrated their excellent knowledge of ways to stay healthy. Their enjoyment is also evident in their high attendance and in the

excellent attitudes they have towards school. In particular, they talk about how much they enjoy using the computers. Their behaviour is exceptional both in and out of classes.

The quality of the teaching and learning is outstanding. This high quality is maintained by superb teamwork amongst the staff. Their mutual support and sharing of good practice result in consistently exceptional provision. This is evident in the way that teachers who are new to the profession and to the school are supported. Lessons are challenging and well paced. Resources are of extremely good quality and used very effectively. The teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is exceptional and has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. The systems for assessing, tracking and recording pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics are a major strength. Assessment is used well by teachers when planning lessons for the range of ability in the class and for ensuring that pupils do not fall behind. Their marking of the pupils' work is very successful in helping all learners to understand what they need to do to improve. All safeguarding arrangements are robust and systems for ensuring pupils are safe and well looked after in school meet all necessary requirements.

The school is so successful because of its outstanding leadership. All staff have important leadership roles that they willingly and successfully carry out. They are actively encouraged to show initiative and to try new ideas and they respond with vigour and enthusiasm. In particular, the school improvement team has a significant impact on new initiatives, such as curricular innovation and personalised learning. The headteacher has already demonstrated in a very short time exceptional ability to lead the school through important changes. The school's systems to check its own effectiveness are excellent and firmly focused on improvement and maintaining the high standards. The governing body provides an exceptional level of support and challenge for the school and individual expertise is used very well. Pupils' achievement and the outstanding quality of education make clear that the school has the capacity to continue moving from strength to strength.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The outstanding provision and progress, and exceptional personal development, care and guidance, found throughout the school are also evident in the EYFS. Children start in the Nursery with a range of pre-school experiences. They make exceptionally fast progress because the activities provided for them are well organised and led very well by all the adults in the setting. This is also true for those children with learning or behavioural needs. Excellent use is made of the very good outdoor facilities. This was evident when children were playing the role of garage mechanics; they developed early writing skills and improved their speaking as they telephoned customers to collect their cars. The excellent work continues into the Reception classes. Children continue to achieve outstandingly well so that by the time they enter Year 1, standards have risen to be broadly in line with the national average. The teaching is excellent throughout the EYFS and the provision is outstandingly well led and managed. As one parent said of her child, 'I am particularly impressed at how carefully her ability has been assessed and how closely her lessons match her ability.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop rigorous assessment of the subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics, following the changes made to the range of the creative curriculum.

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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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	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

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
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

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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	1
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 effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	1
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**

21 November 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Sawley Infant and Nursery School, Sawley, NG10 3DQ

Thank you for the way you made us so welcome when we visited your school recently. You were all so polite and well behaved - we were very impressed. We especially enjoyed talking to some of you. I was very interested to be shown how you take the lead in managing the learning you choose by the four helpful Year 2 pupils who took me on a tour of the school.

The school song you wrote was very good - especially when you sing:

They help us; we do the work, Who helps us? The teachers do. In our school we all try hard,
We like learning something new.

I also want to tell you what we found out about your school. Your school is outstanding. There are many really good things about it but here are some.

- You learn many new things and are very good at reading, writing and number when you leave the school.
- Your teachers and the other adults all work very hard to help you learn.
- The school has created an excellent range of activities for you to investigate and to follow so you can learn the things you really want to know.
- You are all very happy and safe in school and you enjoy your work.
- Mrs Harral is an excellent headteacher who makes sure that you are extremely well taught and looked after.

As your school is excellent, there are not many things it needs to do to improve. One thing is that the staff should find out even more how well you are doing in your subjects, other than reading, writing and mathematics, to make sure they really know how well you are learning.

Thank you again for your help. Keep working hard and enjoy your time at Sawley.

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms

Lead inspector