

# Plumtree School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY241170
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 May 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Ann Keen
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Nursery Education

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Plumtree School was opened by the present owners as an independent co-educational primary school in 1982. The school occupies the original village school premises. The children who attend live in the surrounding areas.

There are currently 109 children on roll, 26 of whom are in receipt of funding for early years education. The school is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children for whom English is not their first language.

The daily sessions are from 09:00 until 12:00 and 13:25 until 15:25 for 36 weeks of the year. The nursery children may attend full or part-time at the provision.

Two qualified teachers and four staff with recognised childcare qualifications work with the children. In addition, four teachers provide specialist support. The school receives support from the local authority.

### Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a very good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Staff's expectations are very high, and staff provide a wide range of interesting and stimulating experiences to move children on to their next stage of learning. Consequently, children are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals. Plans are developed from themes like, 'living and growing', for example. These are clearly linked to the six areas of learning and they are adapted well to incorporate events that are meaningful and relevant to the children. Access to very good resources support children's learning very well and the rooms are inviting so children want to participate. Displays are attractive and the wide range of activities available draw children into the rooms. Staff are warm and kind, giving children good levels of support and providing skilled intervention in their play. Staff maximise on activities to extend and consolidate children's learning, for example, children are encouraged to use mathematical language to count the children present. Children's behaviour is excellent, promoting an effective learning environment. Staff work directly with children providing high levels of support and they adapt the work to children's ability to enhance their development effectively. Children enjoy periods of play outside where they freely choose activities that have particular appeal to them. There are suitable procedures in place to enable the staff to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff maintain close links with the local authority should they need advice and support.

Assessments are regularly made and recorded based on observations of children's achievements. These are used to build profiles for each child and children are grouped according to their next steps of learning. Consequently, children are challenged in their thinking to help their learning to progress. Children are interested, motivated to learn and are gaining good self-care skills and confidence. Children are starting to manage their own personal needs with support from staff such as washing their hands after going to the toilet. Children are making very good progress in their communication, language and literacy development through careful guidance from staff. Books are an important part of children's learning and they are encouraged to take a book home to share with parents as part of the daily routine. A very good range of colourful equipment provides children with very good resources to support their mathematical development. They confidently recognise numerals as they use the computer and use mathematical language as part of their games. They throw dice, for example, to indicate how many beanbags they can throw into a bowl. Children's creative development is supported very well, they play happily with musical instruments, fully developing their creative skills. Children enjoy listening to and exploring sounds and rhythms. They sing familiar songs from memory. Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them by investigating and exploring through first hand experiences in an interesting environment. Children in the reception have free access to a small outside area that reflects various areas of learning with a range of colourful equipment. The children successfully learn about nature as they participate in a host of activities connected with, 'What do flowers need to grow?' Children have access to some messy play opportunities, for example, using play dough provides malleable materials for children to experiment with and use the muscles in their hands and arms. Children use the spacious outdoor area daily where a good range of equipment promotes all aspects of their physical development. Children have ample space to exercise outside and planned physical education lessons to develop their physical skills.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed and treated with equal concern, this helps them feel valued. Good links with home are established, for example, children take home a reading book in which both staff and parents comment. This helps ensure parents have very good opportunities to contribute to their children's learning. Children gain an awareness of the cultures and beliefs of others through planned activities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The setting has a positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff understand the need to work in close partnership with parents and carers. Children understand good responsible behaviour as staff follow consistent strategies and have a few simple rules that children can understand and remember them. Children are learning to take turns well and show consideration for others. Extremely good use of praise and encouragement helps build children's self-esteem.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of early education is good. Children benefit from a sharing of information between parents and staff to enhance their learning. This promotes children's progress and helps them to fully contribute to the provision. Parents are actively encouraged to become involved in their children's learning in meaningful ways. Parents are provided with good quality information about the school and feel able to share information about their children with staff. They are kept very well informed of their children's progress via parents' evenings and regular written reports.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management is good. Good teamwork enables all staff to work together well to promote the children's enjoyment and achievement. Good planning systems are adapted to enable children to make excellent progress in all areas of their development. Systems for monitoring the provision throughout the school are established. The school is setting up a system for close self- evaluation. When fully effective, it will enable staff to more effectively identify the weaknesses in their own practice; looking at how worksheets are used, for example. Staff use the support from the local authority well to enhance the quality of the nursery education. Teaching strategies are successful, giving children strong foundations on which to build and learn. The deployment of staff ensures that children are given very good levels of support and are able to make excellent progress in their learning. Overall, children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection there were no significant weaknesses to report but consideration was asked to be given to the opportunities for using programmable toys and ensuring all children have the same opportunity to experience physical development. As a result, children control programmable toys to help their learning of information and communication technology as well as other areas of learning. Staff are aware of the different patterns of children's attendance and make allowances to ensure that all children have the same opportunities for physical development.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

#### The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to develop the system for self-evaluation to highlight minor weaknesses in the provision.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)