

Grange Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123956
Local Authority	Stoke-On-Trent
Inspection number	359551
Inspection dates	11–12 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Shirley Herring

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Clive Lycett
Headteacher	Ms Jacqueline Brown
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2008
School address	Harrowby Road Meir, Stoke-on-Trent Staffordshire ST3 7AN
Telephone number	01782 319143
Fax number	01782 319143
Email address	grangenurs@sgfl.org.uk

Age group	3–5
Inspection dates	11–12 November 2010
Inspection number	359551

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 sessions of varying lengths and observed eight teachers working with children. They held meetings with governors, staff and other professionals and groups of children. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's assessments and tracking of children's progress, school policies, including safeguarding, and the school development plan. They examined 26 questionnaires completed by parents and carers.

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

- The extent of the achievement of different groups to judge the effectiveness of teaching and the use of assessment information.
- The extent of children's progress in communication, language and literacy, particularly linking letters and sounds.

Information about the school

The vast majority of children in this average-sized nursery school are from a White, British background and very few children are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average as is the proportion known to be entitled to free school meals. The number of children that the school can admit has been reduced from 90 to 60 since the last inspection. The deputy headteacher retired and her replacement took up post in January, 2010.

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

This is a good school. It has outstanding strengths in the care, guidance and support it provides, strong partnerships with others, the promotion of equal opportunities and aspects of children's personal development. Children have an exceptionally good understanding for their age of what is needed for a healthy lifestyle. They happily cooperate with each other and enjoy the responsibilities of helping the teacher, for example, by taking the register to the office.

Most children enter the school with a range of skills that overall are below what is typical for their age. They make good progress and acquire skills that are broadly similar to what could be expected for their age by the time they leave. The strong emphasis placed on developing children's personal and social skills enables children to reach a level that is beyond what is usual for their age in this aspect of learning. The school's good procedures for assessing and tracking children's progress shows that learning has been less effective in helping children to link letters and sounds. Also, some children who are ready to try out simple calculations are not given enough opportunities to do so. The school is focusing on addressing these aspects, for example, by choosing a picture label for children's coat pegs that has the same initial sound as their name.

The school is led and managed well and has a good reputation in the area. The headteacher is fully involved with other heads of nursery schools in the city to strengthen training opportunities, for example, in arranging a nationally respected speaker to help schools to develop their outdoor learning.

Teaching is good overall and examples of outstanding practice, indoors and outside, were observed during the inspection. There is a clear emphasis on the needs of the individual and so children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified at an early stage. They receive very good support and make good progress. The school has identified those who are potentially gifted and talented and is looking to enhance the challenge for these children.

The school has made good progress in developing the strategic role of governors since the last inspection and this process continues. The headteacher, ably supported by her associate deputy, monitors the work of the school in great depth and has a good understanding of the strengths and needs of the school. Consequently, the school has a good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment by:

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

- providing more experiences for children to link letters and sound so that more can attain the level expected for their age
- providing even more challenge for children, including the more able, to work out simple calculations.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

2

Children enjoy school and learn well because activities are varied, suitably practical and engage their interest. Children were excited when they dropped vegetable dye into milk and watched the effect as the colour spread 'like a firework'! They learned a lot about the autumn as they photographed trees and had fun sweeping up the coloured leaves. They behave well for their age and this enhances their learning.

Achievement is good. Children make good progress in their learning and attain standards that are broadly typical for their age when they leave the Nursery. They make particularly good progress in developing personal and social skills and attainment is above what could be expected in this area of learning. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress overall, though some make outstanding progress in terms of their behaviour. Children at an early stage of learning English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well.

There are very good relationships between adults and children and so they feel exceptionally safe in this very supportive environment. Children have an exceptional understanding of a healthy lifestyle as they enjoy an abundant range of fresh fruit at snack time, benefit from robust exercise outside and develop a mature awareness of the need to wash their hands before eating. They make an outstanding contribution to the school community as they take on responsibilities as special helpers, put up their hands and take turns and work together. They see their views count, for example, when their votes for improving the school led to the purchase of two goldfish, which they named Gertrude and Max. Their good attendance and enjoyment of learning prepare them well for the future. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They are developing a strong understanding of different faiths and cultures as they make sweets to celebrate Divali, sing Christmas songs for older people in the neighbourhood and celebrate Chinese New 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

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	1
Children's behaviour	2
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	2
Taking into account: Children's attendance ¹	2
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers manage children's behaviour very well as they make regular reference in words and pictures to aspects such as good listening and good sitting, with appropriate stickers as a reward. They ask good questions to encourage children to speak and to develop their understanding. There are good procedures for assessing children's progress and the information is used to plan the next steps in learning, particularly for those needing extra support. While activities capture children's interest, the more-able children are not always challenged enough to take their learning forward.

The curriculum is firmly based on purposeful, practical activities, both indoors and in the excellent outdoor area, that show a good understanding of how young children learn. The school's strong emphasis on planning for children's personal development provides many opportunities for them to gain confidence and independence. This is seen as children are encouraged to put on their own coat, use a knife and fork and be considerate of others. Reading and counting skills are developed systematically and well. Planning does not yet provide a wide range of opportunities for children to link letters and sounds or to tackle simple calculations where appropriate, although the school has identified these as areas for improvement. There is a good range of visits and visitors to enhance learning.

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

The school provides a warm and welcoming environment in which children thrive socially and emotionally and they feel safe and secure very quickly. The school's very good links with the Children's Centre and its professionals help the school to identify any special needs at an early stage and to plan high quality, individual support for the most vulnerable, and where appropriate their families, before they start. Consequently, children make good progress and achieve well. The school provides clear guidance for children's behaviour, for example, 'We always walk in school!' and these are consistently applied by all adults, so behaviour is good. Children at an early stage of learning are supported very well through demonstrations and pictures so they make good progress in language and understanding.

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 high expectations and communicates this effectively to staff; she values their contribution and so there is a strong sense of adults working together for the benefit of the children. The school has developed good systems for assessing and tracking children's progress and these are used effectively to identify and address areas for development. The school has recognised a need to improve children's ability to link letters and sounds and is taking action to bring about improvements, but it is too soon to measure any impact.

There has been a good improvement in the strategic role of the governing body since the last inspection and it is continuing its action plan to improve further. Governors are well aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding children, including the most vulnerable. Systems are robust and regularly checked by managers and parents agree that the school takes good care of their children.

The school has a strong commitment to fighting discrimination. It has organised anti-racist workshops for parents and carers which complement the school's work with children. The school is monitoring the progress of different groups to identify any variation in achievement and has taken successful action to improve boys' reading. It is now focusing on the achievement of different ethnic groups over time, though children who are learning English as an additional language make good progress in lessons.

The school has developed good links with parents and carers who are welcomed into school. Their views are taken into account, for example, by including Fathers' Day as well as Mothers' Day in the school calendar. Training is taking place for parents and carers in

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

school in advance of the launch of a new learning platform, where parents and carers can look at information and different activities on the school's website to keep them informed and involved in their children's learning.

The school's outstanding commitment to developing links with partners has proved highly effective in promoting children's learning and well-being. The very close links with professionals in the Children's Centre on site have enabled the school to identify and plan for children's specific needs before they start in the Nursery. The headteacher plays a leading role in chairing a cluster of local schools to enhance staff training and improve provision; for example, by developing take home packs to help parents and carers support their children's learning.

The school is demonstrating a commitment to the local community and questionnaires show that local people value the school's contribution, for example, in attending the cultural cafe, which gave an opportunity to share food and conversation with people from around the world. The school has links with a school in Darlington to enhance children's awareness of the lives of others. The school is developing links with a nursery in Sweden to extend its global links.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
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

Approximately a third of parents completed the questionnaire, which is broadly average. Inspection evidence confirms the positive views that parents have about the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Grange 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 inspector received 26 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 60 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	88	3	12	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	88	3	12	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	81	5	19	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	81	5	19	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	85	4	15	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)	20	77	6	23	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	81	5	19	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	81	5	19	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	81	5	19	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	22	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



15 November 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Grange Nursery School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST3 7AN

Thank you for being so kind and helping the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We were very impressed with how well you behaved and listened to the teachers. Your parents and carers told us how much you enjoy coming to school every day and we can understand why. Teachers plan some very interesting activities indoors and outside to help you to learn.

We think that the Grange Nursery is a good school. In fact some things about it are outstanding, which is the highest praise we can give. The school takes excellent care of you all and it works well with other adults outside school to make sure you have all the help you need. We were very impressed with how much you know about staying healthy. The fruit for your snack looked very juicy and we were very pleased that you all know that you need to wash your hands before eating. You are trying very hard to use your knife and fork at lunchtime and remembered to say please and thank you when you got your dinner. Well done! You are a credit to your parents and carers and your teachers.

When we visit a school it is part of our job to suggest ways in which even a good school could improve. To make the Grange even better the adults are going to help you to learn your sounds at school and to have more practice in using numbers to work things out.

Best wishes to you all, we really enjoyed our time in your Nursery.

Yours sincerely

Shirley Herring

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.