

Langley Moor Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113977
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	357459
Inspection dates	17–18 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Linda Buller

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	76
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Julia Millard
Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Ivory
Date of previous school inspection	5 December 2007
School address	Brandon Lane Langley Moor Durham DH7 8LL
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors made six observations of children's learning, involving one teacher and four nursery assistants. Meetings were held with members of the governing body and staff. Discussions took place with a number of parents and carers and others with whom the school works in partnership. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, development plans, minutes of meetings of the governing body, policies, external monitoring reports, security checks, risk assessments, records of progress monitoring, children's work in their learning journeys and safeguarding policies and procedures. They also considered the analysis of 42 parent and carers questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The attainment and progress of children in communication, language and literacy, to determine whether provision is sufficiently challenging.
- The level of children's personal outcomes to determine whether the school's provision for personal, social, emotional development is as effective as that seen at the last inspection.
- The effectiveness of the school's use of its self-evaluation information to drive improvement.

Information about the school

The nursery is average in size. The vast majority of children are of White British heritage with a very small proportion from minority ethnic groups. A very small number of children enter the nursery at an early stage of learning English. A very small minority of children are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

Langley Moor Nursery is a good school. Children arrive happily at the beginning of their sessions with smiling faces, keen to find their friends and share their news with the grown-ups. Their enthusiasm and enjoyment of learning are due in no small part to the excellent relationships which exist between staff and children. Children flourish in the secure atmosphere where the personal needs of the individual are paramount. As a result, outstanding behaviour, including the ability to share resources and to listen carefully to instructions, adds significantly to children's good achievement. The school has developed outstanding systems to engage parents and carers in their children's learning. The vast majority of parents and carers are very pleased with the excellent way in which the school enables them to contribute to their children's good progress.

All groups represented in the nursery, regardless of gender, talent, or special educational needs and/or disability make equally good progress as a result of good teaching and a relevant and interesting curriculum. Staff are skilled at intervening in children's learning and in asking questions which prompt children to investigate further. This is reflected in the often well above average attainment in children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Although satisfactory, children show least progress in their communication, language and literacy development. Actions taken to provide good quality opportunities for children to develop early reading and writing skills are working well and standards are rising. This demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve further. Occasionally, however, when teaching and learning takes place with children working in larger groups with one adult, those children who are confident and articulate dominate responses, with the result that quieter, shy children become passive learners and their progress slows. This is particularly evident in the development of their communication, language and literacy skills. Careful observations of what children know and can do are used effectively to plan activities which match children's interests. Staff knowledge of how to use the information gained from observations of learning is still developing and occasionally leads to over cautious assessments of children's levels of ability and subsequently, to a lack of challenge in future activities.

Good analysis of the progress made by all groups of children contributes well to accurate self-evaluation. However, the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is not as regular as it could be. As a result, the small inconsistencies in the quality of teaching have not been quickly identified. Consequently, teaching remains good and has not yet improved to outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further accelerate the rate at which children make progress, particularly within communication, language and literacy by:

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- improving the ability of staff to use the information gained from observing children to accurately and consistently assess the level of children's knowledge and skills
- sharpening strategic planning so that staff are fully prepared to seize every opportunity to develop children's knowledge and skills across all areas of learning in each adult-led and child-chosen activity
- deploying staff so that the ratio of adults to children is sufficient in all activities to fully involve and challenge all children in their learning.
- Improve the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems and procedures by:
 - increasing the regularity with which senior leaders observe teaching and learning and using the information gained to drive improvement
 - consistently using the analysis of children's attainment and progress to set clear targets and success criteria which are linked rigorously to improved outcomes for children.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children**2**

Overall, children enter the school with skills and abilities below those normally expected. When they leave, most children have attained levels above those expected in most areas of their learning. Throughout their time in the nursery, the quality of children's learning is good; they sustain concentration well during adult-led activities and when engaged in activities without close adult direction. Children of all abilities achieve well and thoroughly enjoy the wide range of activities and good quality resources provided both indoors and in the attractive outdoor area. Articulate and able children have high levels of interest and motivation, either playing independently or often organising themselves and others (including the lead inspector!) in a mature and sensible way. For example, they carefully explain the rules to be followed in playing 'shape dominoes'. Their ability to recognise two dimensional shapes as complex as semi-circles and hexagons is testament to their good progress and attainment in this area of their learning. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good strides in their learning often closing the gap to attain standards similar to that of their peers.

Children are prepared well for the next stage of their education and later life. Although children's attainment in their personal, social and emotional development is not as high as that observed at the time of the last inspection, they continue to make at least good and often outstanding progress from lower starting points on entry to nursery. Those children who have already accessed nursery provision for three terms show great care and tolerance towards their new classmates, who are still settling into nursery routines. Children have a good understanding of how to stay healthy. They take plenty of active exercise and know about healthy things to eat. They do occasionally need reminding about the need to adhere to strict routines for hygiene, such as hand washing and the disposal of tissues. Children's confident manner and self-esteem indicate how safe they feel. They use equipment safely and circulate around the nursery sensibly contributing to the safety of themselves and others.

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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	2
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	1
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

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?

Good teaching is underpinned by the staffs' good knowledge of how young children learn and a desire to plan a curriculum which reflects children's interests. Weekly planning meetings enable staff to share their observations of children's knowledge and skill and plan activities which will support children in taking their next steps in learning. On occasion, however, children do not progress as much as they could when opportunities are missed by staff to build on children's prior knowledge and skill in aspects of learning other than those identified as the key learning focus.

Exciting activities indoors and in the outdoor area inspire children's keenness to learn. There are plenty of opportunities for children to work and play with adults and each other or to pursue interests and learning on their own. Children's experiences are effectively broadened through visits near and far and by inviting visitors to share their skills.

The key worker system provides good pastoral care. Staff, including senior leaders, are on hand to welcome children and their families at the start of each session. Good quality dialogue with parents and carers contributes well to children's safety and support. Staff are fully aware of any specific needs and are diligent in following agreed welfare procedures. They very effectively identify and support vulnerable children and engage

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very effectively with outside agencies, such as health professionals, to minimise any barriers to learning.

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	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The school promotes equality of opportunity well. Overall, staff work effectively to ensure that there are equal opportunities for all children whether they attend in the morning, afternoon or for half of the school week. Information on children's progress is analysed carefully and the information used to adjust provision in order to close any gaps evident in the progress made by those of different gender or ability. As a result, although the progress of some children may be slower in large group sessions, by the time they leave the nursery all children have made equally good progress.

Leaders and managers are good at embedding ambition and driving improvement. Everyone's views are sought regularly, valued and acted upon. However, evaluation and improvement planning documents occasionally lack clear targets or measurable success criteria and this can limit their use as a tool to drive improvement.

The nursery's engagement with parents and carers is excellent. They are strongly encouraged to contribute to the recording of children's learning journeys by providing information of those things which children enjoy when not at nursery. This provides staff with a greater insight into children's interests and range of ability, and also provides a very effective link between home and school. Good partnerships are developed with a range of other agencies to enhance what the school itself can provide. Community cohesion is good. Children celebrate the festivals of different cultures, such as Easter, Chinese New Year and Diwali and through media, such as books, video and art they learn to appreciate the different circumstances and beliefs of others.

The governing body is supportive and provide good challenge. It takes the monitoring role very seriously and governors visits to the school result in detailed and highly informative reports to the governing body. Statutory policies and procedures are fully in place and are reviewed regularly. However, systems to check that these are fully reflected in school practice are not always rigorous enough. All the required systems, procedures and practices to safeguarding children are fully in place and well understood by staff.

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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	3
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
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

More than 50% of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire which is considerably higher than average. Those who did so or who spoke to the inspection team are very pleased with the school. The vast majority strongly agree that their children enjoy school. They express their appreciation of the welcome they receive from members of staff, all of whom are seen as approachable. There is considerable parental praise for how well children are cared for and the effectiveness with which staff address individual need. A very small number of parents and carers expressed a desire to receive more information regarding their children's progress. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is addressing this issue very well. During the week of inspection, the new arrangements to improve the quality of reporting to parents and carers were working well, with many expressing their appreciation of the quality of the information provided.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Langley Moor 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 inspection team received 42 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 76 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	79	9	21	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	86	6	14	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	62	14	33	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	62	14	33	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	81	8	19	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	67	12	29	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	71	11	26	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)	23	55	12	29	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	69	13	31	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	60	10	24	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	62	14	33	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	31	74	10	24	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	83	7	17	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



20 January 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Langley Moor Nursery School, Durham, DH7 8LL

It was lovely meeting you when we visited recently. Thank you for being so friendly and showing us what you were doing. You seemed to be very happy children. This is because your nursery is a good school where the adults look after you very well. You like playing with your friends and really enjoy learning lots of new and exciting things. You are very grown up and this shows in your excellent behaviour.

I really enjoyed joining in with you when you played shape dominoes. It was lovely to see just how many different shapes you have learnt since you joined the nursery and how well you do what your teachers ask you to do. I am sure the birds are already feeding on the bird cakes you made for them.

Even in good schools things can be better. So I have asked your nursery to improve some things to help you to do even better in your speaking, listening, reading and writing where you learn a bit slower than in other things.

The adults help you a lot and give you lots of different things to do. I have asked Mrs Ivory to make sure that she checks more often that the things you do are always as good as they can be.

You can all help with this by carrying on being very sensible and as good as you are now. Once again, thank you all for being so nice. It was lovely meeting you.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Linda Buller

Lead inspector

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