

# Borough Road Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113982
<b>Local Authority</b>	Darlington
<b>Inspection number</b>	357460
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 January 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Waugh

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	82
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cllr Isobelle Hartley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lynn Millar
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Borough Road Darlington County Durham DL1 1SG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01325 380785
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and saw six members of staff teaching. They held meetings with governors, staff, a representative from the local authority and the manager of the co-located day-care provision. They observed the school's work, and looked at children's learning journeys stored digitally, policies, planning and assessments and 46 parental questionnaires.

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

- How well different groups of children achieve, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who also attend the day-care provision.
- How well members of staff support children's learning as they play.
- How well leaders and managers evaluate and check the work of the school.

## Information about the school

Borough Road Nursery School offers 104 part-time places. It is situated in the centre of Darlington but children attend from a much wider area. The vast majority of children are White British. There are very few children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Attendance patterns are fully flexible to meet the needs of parents. Children attend the nursery for 12.5 hours a week and spend the remaining 2.5 hours with the co-located private day-care provision, which also offers holiday and wraparound care. The day-care provision was not inspected.

**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**

**3**

## Main findings

This is a good school, where children make good progress in their learning and in their personal development. This is because children are well cared for and supported, in a warm, welcoming atmosphere. They have a good relationship with all staff which gives them the confidence to try new activities and explore the interesting environment around them. The link with parents is equally strong and ensures staff are fully aware of each child's circumstances.

Children's achievement is good and by the end of nursery, the majority reaches the level expected for their age and some exceed it. Good behaviour ensures that children feel safe. They make a good contribution to the local community and to the ethos of the nursery by following rules and showing respect and concern for each other. Children's sound basic skills help prepare them for the next stage of learning but they are rarely given opportunities to take responsibility in their daily routine to help foster their independence further.

Children arrive in nursery each morning eager to play in the many activities offered to them, both indoors and in the nursery garden. However, currently, restrictions on the range of resources indoors, owing to the building work being undertaken, mean that children do not always have enough choice of activities indoors and this sometimes limits their learning and independence. Adults guide children through careful questioning and the use of resources so that they understand new learning. This is particularly successful during group times, though not consistently so when adults are supporting children's play. Practitioners' questioning sometimes breaks the flow of children's play and adults can be too eager to give children the answers rather than allowing time for them to resolve the issue themselves. Although careful observations are made to inform adults about children's learning and interests, these are 'snapshots' of learning and do not always fully explore the full extent of children's capabilities .

Leadership and management are good. The recent upheavals to the nursery caused by the integration of the day care into the accommodation and provision, alongside ongoing building work, have been very successfully managed. The vision and ethos of the nursery have remained strong, and enhanced partnership working has had a positive impact on children's learning. However, during this time, the quality of the school's checks on its own work, including those allocated to the governing body, has become ad hoc and they lack the rigour needed to address shortcomings promptly. As a result, the school currently has satisfactory capacity to improve.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of adult support for children's play and raise standards by:

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- ensuring all staff spend time engaging children in purposeful play which extends their thinking and understanding
- extending children's understanding by regularly offering them opportunities to resolve problems and dilemmas within their play
- engaging in regular opportunities to observe children at length so that it is clear what they know and can do in order to move their learning forward more rapidly.
- Further develop children's independence by:
  - reorganising each session to encourage children to take more responsibility for daily routines
  - making a wider range of resources easily accessible in areas of learning.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - evaluating the quality of all aspects of teaching and learning so that issues can be promptly addressed
  - ensuring that the governing body regularly and systematically evaluates the work of the school and hold it to account more effectively.

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

The majority of children enter nursery with skills that are below what is typical for their age. They all make good progress because they feel cared for, behave well and feel secure and safe. Those children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress because they are very well supported and receive additional specialist help to overcome difficulties.

Children are enthusiastic learners and are keen to try out the new activities that staff have prepared for them. They confidently move from one activity to another, playing with each other harmoniously. For example, a group of girls in the role play area made tea for each other and their 'babies'. The babies were given pears to eat because 'it's good for them'. This good understanding of how to keep healthy is supported by the keen use of bikes, buggies and barrows that are pushed up and down the hill to fetch various objects.

Children make a good contribution to the development of the nursery. They follow rules and act responsibly. Their interests and ideas become activities for them to develop their learning. For example, an interest in posting a letter stimulated the development of a post office role play area. They also contribute to the local community: signs in the surrounding streets reminding people to pick up their litter were produced by the children.

Their spiritual, moral social and cultural development is sound, reflecting children's interest in learning and curiosity about the world; their cultural awareness is underdeveloped. Children's preparation for the next stage of learning is supported by their confidence and the skills they have gained, but the opportunities they have to take responsibility, are limited so that they take little part in tidying up at the end of sessions or preparing snacks for each other.

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*These are the grades for children's outcomes*

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which children feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Children's behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Children's attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Teaching is good because all practitioners understand how young children learn and develop. Each child has a key worker who provides a vital link with families and who ensures that their needs are met. Staff successfully guide children to learn through short, pacy sessions, which maintain their interest and engagement. Many of the activities they prepare are open-ended which means children can be effectively supported and challenged at an appropriate level for their capabilities. Children's interests are carefully noted as is their learning from more structured tasks. Learning from children's play is not as well documented. Because staff record brief notes of learning, they sometimes intervene too quickly to check a child's understanding rather than taking time to allow the child to express themselves more fully. At these times practitioners provide children with the answer in their eagerness to support rather than guide them towards finding the solution for themselves.

Key workers track and document children's learning well. Learning diaries stored digitally provide a clear picture of children's development and learning.

The curriculum provides a good range of interesting and challenging activities. They are designed to stimulate and engage children to learn through their play. Staff are careful to record what children are doing so that they can plan to offer experiences in all areas of

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learning. Children's learning is enriched by visits and visitors such as music sessions provided by partner schools, a journey on a train or a visit to the woods. These are greeted with excitement and enthusiasm.

The outdoor environment offers a tempting range of opportunities in all areas of learning and it is effectively used. For example, some boys were absorbed in pouring water from a large container and mixing it with soil to see what happened. They noticed that the water changed colour. The indoor environment currently works less successfully because of temporary arrangements linked to the building work. All areas of learning are covered but the full range of resources is not available for children to access independently.

Practitioners provide good care. They act as role models for the children showing consideration and kindness. Children whose circumstances place them at risk of being vulnerable receive positive support. This helps them to integrate into the nursery so that they can access all that is on offer. Good links with external agencies and tenacious work by the school ensure that the needs of all children are met. Transition for the children who attend both the school and day-care provision is effective and provides them with continuity.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management are good because of teamwork and a common commitment to raising children's attainment and providing a stimulating environment. This is underpinned by a strong, effective relationship with parents. The valuable harnessing of expertise from a range of external agencies such as the local health visitor and a counsellor has been successful in promoting the learning and well-being of the children and their families. This proactive approach results in all children being given the same chances to succeed whatever their need. The desire to provide a safe and secure environment means that safeguarding and welfare requirements are met. Community cohesion is sound. The nursery is a caring and supportive community, which reaches out to work alongside many organisations in the local area but understanding of other cultures in Britain and the wider world is not as well developed.

The governing body provides a high level of support and commitment to the nursery. However, their recent focus on securing a positive outcome to the changes in accommodation and integration of the day-care provider has resulted in a lack of rigour to their evaluation of the work of the school.

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Self-evaluation is broadly accurate with areas for development outlined in the improvement plan. There has been good monitoring and evaluation of some aspects of teaching but the lack of monitoring of teaching and learning and assessment while children play has left some deficiencies in the quality of provision.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They feel their children are safe and well cared for and they expressed no concerns about the quality of their child's experience at the school. Parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities particularly praised the care and support their child receives. Inspection findings support parents and carers positive views about the school and these are reflected in the report.



## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Borough Road 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 46 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 82 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	83	8	17	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	89	5	11	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	33	72	13	28	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	78	10	22	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	83	8	17	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	80	9	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	72	12	26	1	2	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)	27	59	17	37	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	72	13	28	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	61	18	39	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	67	15	33	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	37	80	9	20	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	85	6	13	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	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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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 Borough Road Nursery School, Darlington, DL1 1SG**

Thank you for letting me join in with you in your nursery. I could see you really enjoy all of the different things you can do there. Your teachers want you to do things you are interested in. These are some of the things I have said about your school:

- Your teachers care for you and make sure you are safe and you behave very well.
- You know what are good things to eat and drink and how to be fit and healthy.
- You do lots of things outside of nursery and meet lots of interesting people to help you learn.

To make your learning even better I have asked your teachers to play with you more and to give you more jobs in the nursery. I have also asked them to make careful checks to make sure these things happen.

I know you will all work as hard as you can to make everyone proud of you. My very best wishes to everyone at Borough Road Nursery school.

Yours sincerely

Ms Susan Waugh

Lead inspector

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