

# Clervaux Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108661
<b>Local Authority</b>	South Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	356406
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Linda Buller

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>	63
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Alan Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Michelle Dixon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	Clervaux Terrace Jarrow Tyne and Wear NE32 5UP
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<b>Email address</b>	info@clervaux.s-tyneside.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and observed four members of staff. They held discussions with the headteacher, other staff and three members of the governing body including the Chair of Governors. The inspectors spoke individually with many of the children and listened to some parents' and carers' views. They observed the school's work and looked at children's files, teachers' planning, the school's self-evaluation records, assessment and tracking information, improvement plans, safeguarding records, governing body minutes and 15 parent questionnaires.

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

- The attainment of children to determine the effectiveness of the actions taken by the school to close the gap between the outcomes for boys and girls, particularly in their communication, language and literacy development.
- The learning and progress of all groups of children to determine the effectiveness of the systems used to monitor and record progress.
- How well outstanding leadership and management, particularly that of teaching and learning, has been maintained during a period of change.

## Information about the school

The nursery is average in size. For a number of years the nursery was under threat of closure and numbers fell. The decision to maintain the nursery has resulted in numbers beginning to rise. The great majority of children are of White British heritage. A very small proportion of children are identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The children are admitted to the nursery the day after their third birthday and attend for 15 hours per week either mornings or afternoons.

A new headteacher took up post in January 2011 following the retirement of the previous headteacher. This appointment coincided with a flood in the school building and the subsequent need for the removal of asbestos. As a result the nursery was housed in temporary premises; children returned to their own building three weeks prior to the inspection. The nursery is currently undergoing building works to extend the premises. This has limited the available teaching and learning space.

**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

Clervaux Nursery is a good school. Children make good progress and attain levels above those expected for their age, as a result of the wide range of rich activities, provided both inside and outdoors which encourage them to explore, experiment and enjoy themselves. A particular strength is the outstanding provision for children's personal, social and emotional development. Staff take every opportunity to encourage children to make their own decisions and to consider how these will impact on their own learning and well-being and that of their friends. Children have an outstanding knowledge of how to keep themselves safe and have high levels of self-confidence. Parents and carers expressed their amazement at how quickly their children settle into nursery and become independent articulate learners.

Actions taken by the school have ensured that all groups of children generally make equally good progress. In key worker groups, staff know children well and instinctively intervene with questions which prompt children to think for themselves. This contributes to children's outstanding progress in their personal development and in their speaking and listening skills. Provision and outcomes in some other aspects of children's development, particularly early reading and writing skills, are at times less effective. Teachers' observations of children are not always recorded frequently enough, and those which do take place lack evaluative statements. As a result assessments of what children know and can do are not yet wholly accurate. Consequently, teachers' planning and their discussions with children regarding activities they have chosen themselves, do not always fully recognise or facilitate the next steps that they need to take in their learning.

Since her arrival, the headteacher has quickly and accurately evaluated the nursery's strengths and areas for development. The resulting development plan, with its clear success criteria and prioritising of actions, is already being implemented to good effect. For example, adults are becoming increasingly focussed on recording their observations of children's individual interests and using these to adapt the activities on offer. Although a programme of monitoring and staff training, linked to identified priorities and aimed at further improvement in the quality of teaching and learning, is planned, this is at an early stage of development. It is because the nursery is in a significant period of change with new systems and procedures yet to demonstrate sustained improvement that capacity for future improvement is judged satisfactory rather than good at this point in time.

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

- Raise children's attainment, particularly in their communication, language and literacy skills by:

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- ensuring staff regularly and systematically observe all aspects of children's learning
  - ensuring that the information recorded from observations is sufficiently evaluative to enable accurate assessment of children's different levels of attainment
  - ensuring staff use the information gained from observation to formally identify and plan the next steps in children's learning
  - using planning and review times to discuss with children how they can take the next steps in learning when engaged in their chosen activities.
- Strengthen further the impact of leaders and managers in driving improvement in teaching and learning and the outcomes for children by:
- implementing and embedding a system to monitor, record and track children's progress which is accurately aligned to the different phases identified in the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance.
  - using the information gained from accurately assessing children's attainment and progress so as to rigorously monitor the quality of provision.

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

Children's achievement is good. They make good gains in their development from their varying starting points because they thoroughly enjoy all that the nursery has to offer. Most children join the nursery with skills that are below those expected for their age. By the time they leave, the majority are working above the expectations for their age in most areas of their learning and high in their personal, social and emotional development. The exception to this is in their knowledge of letters and their sounds, and in reading and writing in which attainment is broadly as expected. The very small percentage of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities generally make the same good progress as their peers. Additional resources and activities aimed specifically towards boys' interests have been successful in closing the gap between the attainment of boys and girls.

The children are able to sustain high levels of concentration and perseverance and are equally happy choosing what to do alone, with friends, or working with adults. They respond with enthusiasm, wonder and high levels of curiosity to the outdoors provision, which provides a wealth of opportunities for children to reflect and appreciate the wonders of life and the natural world. They exclaim in delight when their digging reveals worms which they examine fully before carefully returning them to, 'where they live'. They use their imagination very well in role-play situations whether planning a 'wedding' or a trip to the 'jungle'. All of these situations contribute very well to excellent progress in their speaking and listening skills. Occasionally, however, opportunities are missed by adults to help children understand how this can be extended into other areas of literacy. This is one of the reasons why communication language and literacy skills are broadly average overall. A further contributing factor is the poor attendance of a small minority of children. School records indicate that this has a particularly detrimental impact on the progress which they make in the development of their early literacy skills.

Children have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe because they are actively taught about what is safe and those things which are dangerous, including how to minimise risk. They spontaneously make sensible suggestions such as using the wet sign

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when water is spilt or the need for oven gloves when taking their cakes out of the oven. Children understand and follow good hygiene routines, for example, independently using the hand-gel before eating their daily snack of fruit or vegetables. Behaviour is good and outstanding relationships are quickly established. Children's keen sense of fairness and cooperation is evidenced in the quality of all their work and play. Older children need no prompting to look after and guide those who are new and this adds significantly to the strong sense of security and belonging demonstrated by the majority of children.

*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>	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
<b>The extent to which children feel safe</b>	<b>1</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>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</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>2</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?

Staff plan a wide range of interesting activities to capture children's imagination and enthusiasm for learning. This plays a significant part in children's good progress.

Adults engage well with the children and successfully join in their games to develop their language and encourage independent learning. Every opportunity is taken to help children to understand how they can contribute to their own safety and well-being. High-quality resources together with skilful questioning encourage children to develop activities at their varying levels of ability. Each key worker has a good understanding of the individual needs of the children in their care. Formal observation, assessment and recording of children's attainment and progress are less well developed. Although observations take place

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throughout the school day these tend to be descriptive rather than evaluative and do not rigorously identify children's progress in specific areas of learning. Useful files of evidence are kept for each child and act as a good means by which staff can share children's achievements with their parents and carers. The evidence gathered, however, is uneven across the different strands of children's learning and does not yet fully provide the information needed to track children's progress or plan for the next steps in learning. As a result curriculum planning is currently very dependant on the knowledge and experience of individual key workers. Whilst this works well in key worker groups it is less effective when children choose activities for themselves.

Children are provided with good levels of care and the nursery works well in partnership with other agencies to enhance the provision for all children and, in particular, for those who are the most vulnerable. Home visits before the children join start to build the very positive relationships that are typical of the nursery. These warm relationships and the knowledge gained of each child's specific circumstances create an atmosphere in which children and parents and carers feel confident to share any anxieties.

*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?**

Through her thorough knowledge of how young children learn best and her inclusive actions the new headteacher has successfully established a clear and shared vision for improvement. Despite significant disruption to normal day-to-day routines created by the flooding of the school building, she has maintained good provision and acted swiftly to ensure that all safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and fully meet requirements. The governing body fully supports the nursery's plans for improvement. During a time of turbulence, the governing body has been central to ensuring that nursery provision has been maintained within their local community. They recognise that they now need to provide the same level of rigour to ensuring that systems are put in place to enable them to fully hold the school to account for its impact on outcomes for children.

A thread through all aspects of the nursery's work is its commitment to equality. Staff expertise has ensured that children in danger of not meeting their full capability are quickly identified and individual learning plans successfully put in place. However, the nursery is aware that formal systems to monitor and record children's progress have not been well enough aligned to the different phases identified in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Analysis of monitoring information has therefore not been as effective as it could be as a means of driving further improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. This

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is one reason why provision and outcomes have not been maintained at their previously identified outstanding level.

The school operates as a cohesive community. It is committed to serving the local community and to involving parents and carers in the learning of their children. Effective partnerships including those with schools nationally and internationally have supported the celebration of the ethnic and cultural diversity of Great Britain and the world. However, the school acknowledges that not all policies and plans relating to this aspect of the school's work have been reviewed regularly enough or their impact formally evaluated.

*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	3
<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>2</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

Although a smaller proportion of parents and carers than in most schools returned the questionnaire all those who did so were wholly supportive of the work of the school. Additional comments particularly praised the work of staff in maintaining the quality of provision for their children during the difficult circumstances of the last few months. Others expressed their positive views regarding the opportunities provided for parents and carers to engage in learning with their children through courses such as numeracy and French. Inspection evidence supports parents and carers positive views.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Clervaux 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 15 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 63 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	9	60	6	40	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	10	67	5	33	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	5	33	10	67	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	53	6	40	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	9	60	6	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	7	47	8	53	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	8	53	7	47	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)	3	20	9	60	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	7	47	7	47	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	4	27	9	60	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	4	27	11	73	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	8	53	7	47	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	9	60	6	40	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.**



9 March 2011

Dear Children

**Inspection of Clervaux Nursery School, Jarrow, NE32 5UP**

It was lovely to meet you all and see how much you enjoy coming to the nursery. I agree with you and your parents and carers that Clervaux is a good nursery school and I can see why you are so happy there. There are lots of interesting things for you to do and a lovely garden to play in. The grown-ups take good care of you and help you to be very independent in making decisions about your learning.

You listen carefully to the adults and your friends and are very confident to talk about what you have been doing and how you use your imagination. I was particularly impressed with all the suggestions I heard you make to keep yourselves and your friends safe and how good you are at helping one another.

To make the nursery even better, I have asked the grown-ups to make sure they keep a careful check on how you are doing, especially how well you are learning about letters and their sounds and to read and write. This will help them to know what you need to learn next and to share this with you when you do your planning and when you are playing in all of the exciting areas.

You can help by continuing with the excellent way you look after each other. Thank you once more for helping me to find out about your nursery.

Yours sincerely

Linda Buller

Lead inspector

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