

Monkchester Road Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108431
Local Authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	356359
Inspection dates	19–20 May 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	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Bernie Matthews
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Humble
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Monkchester Road Walker, Newcastle-upon-Tyne Tyne and Wear NE6 2LJ
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed nine parts of lessons and eight members of staff. Discussions were held with members of the governing body, staff, partners of the school and a few parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at data about children's progress and attainment, children's learning journals, the school's planning documents, policies, procedures and records, including those relating to the safeguarding of children and the questionnaires completed by 55 parents and carers.

- The level of achievement of children in communication, language and literacy to determine how well the strategies introduced by the school bring about improvement
- The achievement of the increasing number of children whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, to determine how successful the school is in meeting their individual needs
- How well leaders and managers, at all levels, use assessment information to measure children's progress, and evaluate the quality of provision in order to inform the next steps in planning

Information about the school

The nursery is above average in size. There is a higher-than-average proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals is high. While most of the children are of White British heritage there is an increasingly wide range of other cultures represented in the school. The nursery is recognised as a leading sustainable school and holds the eco-schools Green Flag and the full International School Award. The school shares its site and works in partnership with the Monkchester Nursery Family Centre Playgroup and Out of School Club. This provision was subject to a separate inspection by Ofsted.

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 many outstanding features. Children thrive in the safe and secure atmosphere created by experienced and committed staff. The school operates as a welcoming cohesive community and is particularly successful in supporting children with complex difficulties and those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Outstanding partnerships with a range of agencies and with parents and carers ensure that all children benefit from the outstanding care, guidance and support provided. Children's appreciation of the wider world and contribution to the community is exceptional, given their young age. They have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. There is no room for discrimination and staff are proactive in ensuring that every child and family has an equal opportunity to benefit from what the nursery provides. As a result, all children, whatever their starting points, are prepared extremely well for the move to Reception classes.

Teaching, which is consistently good and at times outstanding, together with a wide variety of activities, result in above average attainment. Good use of the information gained from regular observations of children's engagement in activities enables staff to plan the next steps required to move children's learning forward. When teaching is outstanding, staff use targeted questioning and high quality observation of children's responses to recognise opportunities to follow children's interests and extend learning beyond that which has been planned. This is not yet a consistent feature of all teaching, as there are times when staff are not flexible enough to alter their planning in order to respond to children's interests and so take their learning on further. Staff pay good attention to promoting children's communication, language and literacy skills. They encourage children to recognise the relationship between letters and their sounds, and methods to promote writing that pinpoint particular weaknesses are extremely effective. At times, though, some of the impact of this high quality provision is lost when class organisation results in high noise levels making it difficult for adults and children to engage in high quality dialogue. Consequently, although children make good progress overall, progress in some aspects of communication, language and literacy development is slower.

Good leadership and management are based on a secure knowledge of each child's individual needs. A good start has been made this year to introduce a new system to provide leaders and managers with precise information on each child's ability measured against that expected for their age. While it is too early to evaluate fully the effectiveness of this development, leaders and managers have an accurate view of the aspects of provision that could be further developed and they are successfully using assessment information in driving forward priorities for improvement. For example, the school identified from its assessments the need to improve the writing of boys and effectively

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introduced new methods to do this. The school therefore has good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise children's attainment in communication, language and literacy by:
 - ensuring that staff give full consideration as to what impact the organisation of classes, and activities provided has on the quality of children's learning and progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that staff consistently take every opportunity to follow children's interests and extend learning beyond that which has been planned.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

2

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the nursery and achieve well. Most enter the school with knowledge and skills at levels that are below those expected for their age. Overall, they learn successfully and make good progress. By the time they leave, their attainment is above that which is typical for their age overall. Most children make rapid progress in their personal development. Whatever their backgrounds, children integrate seamlessly and learn to understand and respect cultural differences. Children's excellent understanding of keeping healthy is evident in their enjoyment of wholesome snacks and healthy lunches. Regular opportunities to comment on what makes them happy or sad or what they enjoy in their learning, result in children who are confident in expressing their views about a variety of matters and who take a keen interest in the world around them. Children's behaviour is good overall. When supported by adults, particularly through outstanding teaching, children listen carefully and follow instructions exceptionally well; this contributes strongly to the quality of their learning. Occasionally, during activities which children choose for themselves, a few find it difficult to manage their own behaviour. Children have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They demonstrate high levels of confidence that adults who care for them will resolve the conflicts which arise. A small number do indicate however, that the behaviour of others makes them feel sad.

Physical skills, such as climbing and balancing, develop rapidly and children often become engrossed in role-play which ignites their creativity and imagination. They thoroughly enjoy music and joining in with rhymes and actions, their faces beaming with pleasure and enthusiasm for learning. Their attainment in some aspects of their communication, language and literacy development, however, is not as strong as in other areas of learning. A significant minority of children enter the nursery with speech and language difficulties which hinder their progress in using language for communication and in recognising the sounds which letters make. In addition, the physical development of some children on entry acts as a barrier to their development of early writing skills. The school has fully recognised these barriers to learning. High quality nurture groups and tailored education plans help those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and those children whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, to make the same good progress as their peers.

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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:	2
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	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	1
Taking into account:	2
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?

Staff have a very good knowledge of how young children learn. A strength of the teaching is the warm and supportive relationships between adults and children which help children feel secure and be confident to learn. For instance, children who become upset or have minor squabbles are skilfully managed so that in no time at all they are again engaged in fruitful activities. Activities both indoors and outdoors tempt children's imagination and allow children to gain in confidence by making decisions for themselves. The curriculum is planned well to build children's experiences and skills successfully across all areas of learning. The development of a sensory room and a small wooded area as a Forest School are two examples of how the school continues to improve provision. However, full consideration is not always given as to what impact the organisation of classes, activities or resources has on children's learning. The school has put in place an effective range of strategies, such as activities that improve the control of a writing tool, to develop children's writing skills, especially that of boys.

Staff give excellent attention to all aspects of care, guidance and support. Children's individual qualities are nurtured and highly valued by staff. Adults are very effective in identifying potentially vulnerable children and engage very effectively with outside

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agencies, such as health professionals, to minimise any barriers to learning and enable all children to thrive and make good progress.

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?

Leaders and managers at all levels are forward-looking and embrace new initiatives in their drive to improve the provision for children. Regular monitoring of the quality of provision provides leaders and managers with a clear view of strengths and weaknesses and identifies where outstanding practice can be used to bring about improvement in the quality of teaching. Individual children's progress is tracked systematically. In previous years, the method by which children's attainment and progress had been measured was not fully aligned to the age related early years guidance used by staff to plan children's learning experiences. Staff are confident that a new system introduced this year will further improve the effective use of assessment information in planning children's next steps in learning. The governing body takes its responsibilities seriously. Their willingness to undertake training and visit the school have helped them to increase their monitoring and evaluation role in order to hold the school to account better.

Children are all valued equally and clear steps are taken to tackle discrimination and remove barriers to learning. Partnerships with a range of agencies are exceptionally strong, ensuring a quick response to children's and families' needs. For example, the very close working relationship between the school and the family centre which shares the school site enables very early identification of any barriers to learning and contributes strongly to the outstanding care, guidance and support provided by the school. The school's arrangements for safeguarding children are robust and the required information is systematically recorded. Training relevant to the specific needs and care of children in this nursery is regularly undertaken. The school's risk assessments and quality assurance procedures, such as the excellent systems for the induction of staff new to the school, are extremely rigorous. The school has an excellent knowledge of its community's needs. The school community is highly cohesive and children are fully involved in maintaining this, not only within the school but also in the local and wider community, through, for example, the school's international schools project.

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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	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	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

There was an above average response rate to the inspection questionnaire. Parents and carers are positive about almost all aspects of the school's work. All agree that their children enjoy school. Parents and carers spoke to inspectors of the keenness of their children to attend the nursery and of the warmth of relationships between staff and children. A very small number of parents and carers expressed concern regarding the safety of their children and how well the school deals with incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Inspection evidence indicates that overall children's behaviour is good and that any incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with swiftly by staff and that safeguarding arrangements have improved and are now outstanding.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Monkchester 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 55 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 104 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	69	16	29	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	31	56	22	40	1	2	1	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	31	56	19	35	4	7	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	62	20	36	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	39	71	15	27	0	0	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	64	16	29	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	62	20	36	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	49	24	44	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	56	21	38	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	49	21	38	5	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	60	19	35	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	34	62	20	36	0	0	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	76	12	22	1	2	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



Dear Children,

Inspection of Monkchester Road Nursery School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE6 2LJ

Thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your nursery. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing the many interesting things you do. Your nursery is good and helps you do well in your learning. There are many things that are outstanding. You are extremely well cared for and this helps you to feel safe and secure. We could see by your smiling faces that you all really enjoy coming to nursery. It was good to see how much you know about how eating fruit and vegetables and getting plenty of exercise helps you to be healthy and strong. One of the very best things about your nursery is how well the adults help you to explain about the things you like to learn or what makes you happy or sad.

You make good progress because you receive good teaching and have lots of exciting things to do. Sometimes teaching is outstanding when the adults change what they have planned for you to do to follow your interests and help you to make outstanding progress. I have asked the nursery to make a few improvements so that this is the case in all of your lessons. I have also asked the nursery to ensure that you are helped to do as well in learning about letters and their sounds and in your reading and writing, as you do in other areas of your learning.

All of you can help too by making sure that you continue to be kind to each other and trying hard in everything you do.

Yours sincerely,

Linda Buller

Lead Inspector

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