

Boldon Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108665
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	377796
Inspection dates	21–22 November 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	153
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michelle Hunter
Headteacher	Susan Stokoe
Date of previous school inspection	11 May 2009
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Registered childcare provision	Boldon Nursery School
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	76
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	May 2009

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons in all the rooms where day care takes place and in the nursery and observed eight staff. They held discussions with members of the governing body, staff, representatives of the local authority, parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of school documentation including planning, monitoring records, the records of children's progress and all documents relating to safeguarding. The questionnaires returned from staff and 71 parents and carers were analysed.

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

- The achievement of all groups of children to determine whether provision is equally outstanding in each area of learning.
- The impact of monitoring and the actions taken by leaders and managers to drive improvement in the rate of children's progress.
- Provision and outcomes for those in receipt of childcare to determine how well the governing body has managed the transitional arrangements.

Information about the school

The nursery is similar in size to other schools of its type. Most children are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals is above average, as is the proportion of children who are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school was awarded Healthy School status in 2009.

In addition to the main nursery, the governing body has registered responsibility for the provision of day care for children aged nought to three years of age, which is managed on behalf of the governing body by a senior nursery officer. The registered day care and the nursery education were inspected as a single inspection, resulting in this single report. The children's centre which shares the school site was inspected separately and does not form part of this report. The report for the children's centre will be published on the Ofsted website.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main Findings

This is an outstanding school. The staff have successfully realised their vision of meeting the needs of each unique child. As a result, the majority of the children leave for local primary schools working at levels of development that are above those expected for children of their age. This, together with excellent attitudes to learning prepares them exceptionally well for their next stage of education and represents outstanding progress from their varied starting points. Their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins the many outstanding aspects of children's personal, social and emotional development.

Close engagement with parents and carers is fundamental to the school's work. Parents and carers express almost universal praise of the school and day-care provision. The care for children, exemplified by practitioners and managers alike, is of the very highest order. The key worker system, where adults take responsibility for a small group of children, is very effective. Babies and children flourish under the sensitive support provided by staff who have an excellent understanding of their needs and of the outstanding safeguarding procedures, which are rigorously implemented and monitored.

The nursery is a hive of stimulating activities. Staff's knowledge of the requirements of teaching within the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Staff model language exceptionally well, consistently encouraging children to explain and extend their thoughts and ideas. Sessions are rigorously planned to provide children with a wide range of learning experiences which fully meet their individual needs. The creative use of space and resources provide variety and inspiration for children's learning from the moment they arrive until they reluctantly leave at the end of the session. Children benefit greatly from access to exceptional outdoor provision. Whatever the weather, they relish the opportunity to play and learn in the fresh air, in an environment rich with structured and natural opportunities to explore and enjoy. The provision in day care is good. Although excellent support has been provided by the governing body, it has not monitored all aspects of this provision regularly enough to ensure that it has continued to improve at the same rate as that in the nursery.

The headteacher's excellent knowledge of early years education has enabled the school to go from strength-to-strength despite recent changes to the leadership and management roles within the centre. The tracking and monitoring of children's

progress are very rigorous. These form an essential part of the school's self-evaluation, which is very well thought through and in turn leads to clear and detailed improvement plans. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop the quality of provision in day care to match that provided in the nursery by:
 - staff fully implementing the best practice seen in the nursery regarding the use of assessment to identify children's next steps in learning
 - improving the quality of the outdoor provision
 - increasing the rigour with which the senior nursery officer and the governing body monitor and evaluate provision.

1

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

When children start in the nursery, their skills, knowledge and understanding are below, and for some well below, those expected for their age, particularly in early language and social skills. Children thoroughly enjoy all the school has to offer. They are eager to attend and immerse themselves in their learning. As a result of outstanding care and support, they quickly grow in confidence, demonstrating high levels of independence and the ability to maintain concentration for extended periods of time. They are extremely curious and relish the opportunities to explore and investigate. They have an outstanding ability to extend their learning through the excellent use of imagination, be it in the hunt for ghosts, recording telephone conversations in the café or treasure hunting in the forest school. These positive attitudes contribute significantly to children's outstanding achievement. Despite the difficulties of delayed speech, which a significant number of children experience, they are confident in engaging in conversations. For example, when asked to explain why what had previously been dry ingredients were sticking to their hands, they patiently explained the process of adding milk and water to make their bread and the changes this had brought about. The opportunity to observe further changes as the bread was cooked on the open fire caused great excitement.

Early identification and close working partnerships between professionals within the day care, nursery and other agencies ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, make the same excellent progress as other children. This is a key strength of the integrated provision and has contributed to the current group of children's overall improved attainment on entry to the nursery.

Children, including the babies in day care, demonstrate a very strong sense of belonging. Regular visits and activities within the local area help nursery children to develop an excellent understanding of their place in the community. Through the adventurous range of activities provided each day, children learn to identify and manage risk. This provides them with an outstanding awareness of how to stay safe. Children are exceptionally knowledgeable about food, take care with personal hygiene and exercise energetically. A high proportion of time in each session is spent out of doors in the fresh air and the children are very active. Babies and the young

children in day care are extremely comfortable and settled because their individual health, physical and dietary needs are fully met. Children make an exceptional start in understanding their place in their local community, in how to respect differences and the value of caring for others. As a result, children's behaviour is exemplary. They demonstrate a maturity beyond their years in the way in which they listen to adults and work alongside each other to resolve any conflicts which may arise.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	2
Children's attainment ¹	1
The quality of children's learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	
The extent to which children feel safe	1
Children's behaviour	1
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	
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Staff are well qualified and work as a cohesive team to provide seamlessly outstanding care and support throughout the day-care and nursery provision. Staff in the babies' room have an excellent understanding of early child development and intuitively provide appropriate responses that match the needs of the babies in their care, for example, in the support and encouragement of those who are ready to feed themselves or are just finding their feet. Consequently, babies are happy, content and make excellent progress in their development. In day care and the nursery, information regarding how well children are doing at home and in school is effectively used to plan new experiences which reflect the interests shown by children. In the nursery, this is combined with dynamic innovative teaching based upon an in-depth knowledge of each child's prior attainment. Staff seize every opportunity to develop communication and language skills through high-quality open-ended questions, which encourage children to think deeply about what they are doing and why. This is not as consistently successful in some areas of day care where, although staff are equally effective in following children's interests, they do not regularly or rigorously enough identify what children need to learn next in order to maintain outstanding progress.

Resources within the nursery are of an exceptionally high quality. This supports the delivery of an outstanding, innovative and stimulating curriculum which is carefully adjusted to match children's individual learning needs successfully. The Forest School

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

initiative does much to develop a strong sense of the importance of the environment and promote awe and wonder about the natural world. Many and varied visits, together with an excellent creative partnership with a local artist, play an outstanding part in pupils' social and cultural development. The nursery outdoor area provides adventure, excitement and a delightful area in which to learn through play. It offers substantial scope for active learning, widens children's experience enormously and substantially fosters their outstanding personal development. This high quality is not as evident in the outdoor area of the day-care provision where the organisation and quality of resources are not as stimulating for these young children.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's unwavering pursuit of excellence has successfully driven forward an agenda of improvement since the last inspection. She has created a team of staff who work exceptionally well together and share her vision to provide all children who attend with an outstanding and equal opportunity to realise their full potential. This has enabled the school to improve provision and outcomes for children to an outstanding level overall, despite the uncertainty surrounding the future of the day-care provision. Children's care and safety are paramount, with outstanding systems for safeguarding woven into the school's daily routines. Staff are exceptionally well-trained in child protection and in turn they deal with any concerns in a proper and effective way. Meticulous attention is given to helping children to understand the role they play in keeping themselves safe.

The foundations for community cohesion are also promoted outstandingly well. As a result, children develop a keen sense of belonging to a safe and cohesive community, where they work and play alongside each other in harmony. The school works very successfully to forge productive partnerships with parents and carers, including those who are hard to reach, who in turn express a very high degree of satisfaction with the school's provision for their children. A wealth of information and shared activities give parents and carers useful ideas to help their children learn at home. Children's learning journals are an excellent example of the shared responsibility between home and school for children's successful learning. Exceptionally strong partnerships with the local community, higher education and curriculum development agencies, here and abroad, greatly enhance the school's work, enrich the curriculum and contribute markedly to community cohesion.

The governing body provides excellent support and good direction. It has ensured that all requirements for children's welfare and childcare registration are met. It diligently considers detailed reports from the headteacher and complements its view of the school through a programme of visits and discussions with key staff. In the

main, it has effectively managed the communication and partnership between all leaders and managers. The positive impact of this can be seen in the improved levels of attainment on entry to the nursery. However, it has been less successful in ensuring that the monitoring and evaluation by those who lead and manage the day-care provision is equally effective in bringing about improvement. Consequently, leadership and management of the day-care provision are good rather than outstanding.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1

Views of parents and carers

An above-average proportion of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are delighted with the care and education provided by the school. Parents and carers spoke to inspectors of the keenness of their children to attend, the rate of their children's learning and of the warmth of relationships between staff and children. Several spoke with feeling of the unfailing support the school provides for families when they experience difficulties. 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 Boldon 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 71 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 156 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	59	83	12	17	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	57	80	13	18	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	51	72	19	27	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	49	69	20	28	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	50	70	18	25	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	48	68	18	25	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	76	17	24	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)	40	56	26	37	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	47	66	20	28	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	59	24	34	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	48	69	19	27	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	49	69	19	27	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	56	79	15	21	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 pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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 pupils. 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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 pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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 pupils 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 pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

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.



25 November 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Boldon Nursery School, Boldon Colliery, NE35 9DG

Thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting you and seeing all of the very exciting activities that your school provide for you. The trip to the Forest School was particularly exciting and we could see how much you all enjoyed this adventure. Your school is outstanding and this helps you to make exceptionally good progress in your learning. You are extremely well cared for and you feel very safe and secure. We could see by how keen you are to get involved with what is on offer and your beaming smiles that you really enjoy your learning. It was good to see how much you know about how eating fruit and vegetables and getting plenty of exercise help you to be healthy and strong. One of the very best things about your school is the way in which the adults encourage you to explain what you are doing and how you feel about your learning. This helps you to make outstanding progress in developing your language skills.

You make outstanding progress in all areas of your learning because the adults make a very careful check on what you know and what you enjoy. They carefully plan what you will do each day so that you build on this and leave the nursery able to do more things than are expected of children your age. Activities provided for some of the children in the day care are not yet as outstanding therefore they make good rather than outstanding progress. Therefore, we have asked the governing body to make a few improvements so that what is provided for these children is as good as that in the nursery.

You can all help to make sure your nursery continues to be outstanding by being as kind and thoughtful to each other as you were during our visit.

Yours sincerely

Linda Buller
Lead inspector

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