

Ellergreen Nursery School and Childcare Centre

Ellergreen Road, Norris Green, Liverpool, Merseyside, L11 2RY

Inspection dates 13–14 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Most children start in the Nursery with skills that overall are below what could be expected for their age. They make good progress and the majority of children are working at the level expected for their age, and some are doing better than this, by the time they leave.
- Teachers plan a wide range of interesting, practical activities that engage children's attention and so they learn well.
- Children respond well to adults' high expectations and the behaviour of these young children is exemplary. They feel safe and secure in this very welcoming environment and come eagerly into school each day, ready to get on with the day's tasks.
- Provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in all the school's work and this contributes to the atmosphere of mutual respect and trust between all adults and children.
- The headteacher has shown considerable determination in driving forward improvements. Well-structured procedures for managing the performance of staff have been used effectively to identify training needs and so improve teaching and children's learning.
- Governors have shown great commitment and determination in guiding the school through major changes in the leadership of the school and the structure of its services.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding to enable children to make even faster progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed two teachers and three support staff leading 12 sessions, one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, she made a number of short visits to observe children involved in activities of their own choice. She also observed a visiting teacher working with one class.
- Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. The inspector talked informally with several parents in school.
- The inspector looked at the school development plan and documentation about children's progress, on procedures for safeguarding children and the monitoring of staff performance.
- The inspector took account of the 15 responses from parents on the online questionnaire (Parent View), two letters submitted by parents, as well as the results of the survey of parents and children conducted by the school. She also scrutinised 12 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Shirley Herring , Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Ellergreen Nursery and Childcare Centre is situated in a community centre on a campus which includes other community facilities.
- The majority of children are from a White British background. Other children are from a number of minority ethnic groups, the largest group being Polish.
- The school has identified 29% of children as being disabled or having special educational needs, including 17% being supported at Early Years Action Plus. The proportion of children who speak English as an additional language is increasing and is currently 22%.
- The school has undergone significant reorganisation since the last inspection, when it was known as Ellergreen Early Years Centre, and was managed by an executive headteacher who also had responsibility for a nearby school. A full-time headteacher was appointed on a temporary basis two years ago and her permanent appointment was confirmed in March 2012.
- The headteacher is responsible for all aspects of the Ellergreen Nursery and Childcare Centre, including childcare for children from 0-3 years which is on a separate site. The childcare provision will be inspected separately and the report will be published on the Ofsted website.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To raise achievement even further increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding by giving children the chance to develop their own thoughts and ideas by:
 - asking questions which require children to explain their ideas
 - providing more opportunities for children to use their developing skills to solve practical problems.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children make particularly good progress in developing personal and social skills. This is because of the high priority placed on this important aspect by the school and the consistent approach and high expectations of all adults. There is a culture of developing independence by encouraging children to try to do things for themselves. However, there is always someone on hand to give help where needed. One boy was really pleased with himself when he persevered to put on his own coat and only needed a little bit of help to fasten the zip.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs achieve well because their needs are identified at an early stage, often when they are still in the school's provision for younger children. They receive good support which helps them to do their best and so make similar progress to others in the Nursery. A particular strength is in the strategies for supporting children with delays in developing language and communication skills, helping children to close the gap in their achievement with others in the Nursery.
- Those children at an early stage of learning English as an additional language achieve well because of the sensitive and supportive way they are welcomed into school. Children benefit from bilingual support where available and interpreters have helped to involve parents in identifying children's needs and interests.
- Children are developing early reading skills well. They enjoy borrowing books from the lending library and are keen to borrow the story sack as a reward for borrowing six books. They welcome the regular opportunities to follow a story in the big books and join in enthusiastically with the rhymes. They become familiar with their own name on the many occasions they are asked to choose their own name card, for example when they have a snack.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers plan a wide range of purposeful, practical activities that show a good understanding of how young children learn. They have a particular strength in building on the interests of individual children to help them to learn.
- They make good use of high-quality resources, indoors and outside, to enhance children's learning. This was seen in 'The Chatterbox Room' when children developed their speaking skills by using puppets and different-sized beds and bowls to retell the story of 'Goldilocks'. These activities also help children to develop an understanding of ideas such as biggest and smallest.
- The curriculum is well planned, linking many aspects of learning to reinforce ideas. This was seen in the topic related to Diwali where children enjoyed the story of 'Rama and Sita', made Diya lamps and also hunted for Sita's bracelets outside before counting how many she had.
- Teachers use very practical ways to develop children's awareness of different cultures. For example, they planned a very popular activity where children made curry. They enjoyed having a taste of what they had made at snack time.
- Teachers make extensive use of questions, often helping children to recall facts, but frequently these questions require only limited answers. Opportunities are sometimes missed to ask more general questions to encourage children to explain their ideas and develop their thinking skills.
- Teachers provide a wide variety of opportunities for children to develop important basic skills of early reading and counting well. However, there are not so many opportunities for children to use and develop these skills in solving practical problems.
- The high expectations and consistent approach of all adults help children to play cooperatively and to behave in an exemplary way.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Parents and children are overwhelmingly of the view that children really enjoy coming to school. They are highly motivated to join in enthusiastically with the full range of activities. This was seen when children spotted the visiting German teacher at the classroom door and, unprompted, immediately stopped what they were doing to sit on the carpet ready to start. They joined in the 'Heads and Shoulders' song in German, with great gusto.
- Their behaviour for such young children is excellent. They are keen to learn and their highly positive approach prepares them very well for school life.
- Children develop a level of independence beyond their years in choosing activities to further their own interests and persist in completing their tasks. One boy spent a long time adjusting the joins in drainpipes by tiny amounts, refusing any help, until a ball could travel freely down the pipe.
- Children respect adults and each other and are scrupulous in taking turns. This was seen when a small group of children were using an electronic tablet to match sounds to the appropriate animal. Though he was really keen to have a go himself, one boy politely pointed out that someone else was before him.
- In completing their own questionnaires, with adult help, all children coloured in the smiley face to show that they felt very safe in school and that they could 'Tell the teacher!' if someone was being unkind.
- They celebrate their similarities and differences when they look closely at the self-portraits they have painted. The individual attention they receive helps them to understand they are all valued. This helps to prepare children consistently well for life in a culturally diverse society.
- They cooperate exceedingly well with each other, as when a group of children worked productively together outside in the large construction area. One child adopted a supervisory role to bring children's ideas together and allocated jobs for the group. They each played their part and succeeded in building a ramp that they could walk up safely.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has high ambitions for the children in school and, through example, discussion, staff training and a willingness to listen, she has developed a strong team who share this ideal. This has resulted in improvements in teaching and raised achievement for the children.
- All elements of the school's work are checked rigorously to identify areas for improvement. Consequently, the school has a clear awareness of what needs to be done and how this can be achieved. The performance of all staff is reviewed constructively to help them to develop their skills even further.
- Recent improvements show that the school has the skill and capacity to carry through its plans. For example, the school identified the need to improve the quality of the outdoor area to enhance children's learning. After much research, leaders and governors united to provide an exciting and high-quality resource, much enjoyed by the children, which is regarded as an example of good provision by others.
- The rich curriculum provides a wealth of opportunities for children to develop secure basic skills and the school is aware of the need to extend the chances for children to improve their thinking skills.
- The school is committed to equality of opportunities; discrimination of any sort is not tolerated. This ensures that the needs of all groups, including disabled children and those new to the country, are well met.
- Parents are very welcome in school and several took the trouble to talk or write to the inspector. They appreciate the regular newsletters and are unanimous in the view that the headteacher and staff are very approachable. They talked of many instances where they and their children had received good support that helped their children to make good progress.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is well aware of its responsibilities and all systems for safeguarding children and staff are in place. It is committed to promoting high-quality provision for the community it serves and is rigorous in ensuring the budget is used wisely to support this ideal. The governing body has provided stability and ensured that the needs of the community were heard during a period of considerable change. It provides well-informed support and has the confidence and knowledge to provide the right level of challenge to senior leaders.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	104506
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	400719

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	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wendy Wade
Headteacher	Jane Rogers
Date of previous school inspection	10 February 2010
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