

# Lord Street Community Nursery School

Lord Street, Allenton, Derby, DE24 9AX

**Inspection dates** 9–10 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Children make good overall progress in developing their skills and understanding, and they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- The school provides very effective support for disabled children and those who have special educational needs. As a result, they make considerable progress and become more confident learners.
- Teaching is good and staff are skilled in promoting the learning of children of this age through play and investigation.
- Behaviour and safety are good and children develop positive attitudes to learning. They particularly enjoy using the outdoor areas and behave sensibly together.
- Parents and carers are very pleased with what the nursery provides and value the close links between home and school.
- The family support worker provides excellent support for families who need it most.
- Senior leaders and the governing body are strongly committed to the school and work successfully with a wide range of organisations to support children and their families.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Staff do not take every opportunity to develop children's speaking skills further through additional questions or focusing on key words.
- The checks leaders make on the work of the school are not thorough enough to ensure consistency in planning and teaching.
- The information staff gain from checking children's progress is not organised and used well enough to identify what else could be improved to raise children's achievement.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 activities where teachers, key workers and teaching assistants led sessions for groups and individual children. They also looked at lunchtime arrangements.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the family support worker, the assessment leader and all teaching staff. Discussions also took place with groups of the children and representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- There were no responses to the online questionnaire for parents and carers (Parent View). However, inspectors spoke to several parents and carers at the start of both days of the inspection and noted the replies to the school's own recent questionnaire. Inspectors also reviewed the 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including records of children's attainment and progress and samples of their work, including their 'learning stories'. Inspectors also looked at planning and monitoring information and considered in detail records relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Sue Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Lewis

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Most children attend the nursery for morning or afternoon sessions, with the option of staying for lunch on some days.
- The school has a specially resourced provision to cater for several disabled children and those who have special educational needs, including autistic spectrum disorders and global learning delay. The proportion of children supported through early action, early action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is, therefore, above average.
- The majority of children are from White British backgrounds. An average proportion of children are from other backgrounds with a small number speaking English as an additional language.
- The nursery has numerous links with the local university and other nurseries. The nursery has a family support worker who liaises closely with a number of external agencies.
- The nursery also provides for children from the age of two but this is registered provision and, therefore, inspected separately.

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

- Ensure that teaching across the nursery is consistently good and increase the percentage that is outstanding by making sure that staff take every opportunity to encourage children to develop their speaking skills so that they become confident in using a wider range of words.
- Improve the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school by ensuring that senior staff:
  - regularly and rigorously check planning and teaching to ensure it is clear what children are meant to learn and that activities are consistently effective in teaching new skills
  - check that information about the progress children make is managed effectively and used in the planning of future activities.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the nursery with a range of skills and experiences that are typically well below those expected for their age. Their communication skills are especially low, with many using only a few words or short phrases. Their personal, social and emotional development is also limited and they lack self-confidence.
- All groups of children make good overall progress. By the time they leave the nursery, their skills are close to expectations for their age.
- Staff check what the children know, understand and can do at various stages during their time in nursery. The resulting data indicate that initially the boys often do not do as well as the girls and that the gap between them has, over time, been wider than usual. The school has worked hard to address this through a range of activities and stories aimed at capturing boys' interest, and no differences were observed in the rates of progress being made between boys and girls during the inspection.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs make particularly good progress towards their individual targets because they are very well supported. The special educational needs coordinator and well-trained and experienced teaching assistants provide very good one-to-one support, where appropriate. This is particularly effective in enabling children who attend the resourced provision and who have more complex additional needs, including autistic spectrum disorders and global learning delay, to be part of the nursery group.
- The small numbers of more-able children are challenged effectively. Activities are well matched to their particular needs. This was seen in an excellent session with some of the older children. Following the story of 'The Selfish Crocodile', children enjoyed playing a game identifying the items in a picnic basket starting with particular letters. The teacher used questions very well to check their understanding of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) and extended this through encouraging the children to identify other words starting with the same sound.
- The small but growing number of children who speak English as an additional language are also well supported. They make good and often rapid progress in developing their confidence and skills, as seen when discussing how to cut, roll and shape dough.
- The children make good progress in developing their language and communication skills. There are numerous opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills, including through singing sessions and role-play. A writing area is provided to encourage early mark-making skills and good use is made of daily story sessions which considerably increase children's interest in books.
- Children have many opportunities to develop their understanding of numbers through regular counting and sorting activities. The outdoor area is used well to develop physical skills and coordination, including through handling toys and tools such as when using spades in the digging area. Parents and carers note how much the children learn about the environment through Forest School activities, including the visit to Elvaston Castle during the inspection.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good overall, ranging from occasionally outstanding to sometimes requiring

improvement. A particular strength is the warm working relationships all staff have with the children. They give them plenty of encouragement and praise for their efforts. This helps to raise their self-esteem and increase their enthusiasm so that they try even harder.

- Staff have a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage areas of learning and of nursery children's development. This means they foster the children's skills in all areas with a particular focus on developing their confidence in order to become more independent learners.
- Children benefit greatly from listening to and re-telling a wide variety of stories when in their groups with a key person. All staff are confident in telling stories and in using different voices to define characters, which helps to bring stories to life. They also use simple props, for example small toys and little houses, to re-enact the story of the 'Three Little Pigs'. The children enjoyed this activity and even the quietest children, including those speaking English as an additional language, were happy to join in.
- Staff make good use of the outdoor areas. Adults encourage imaginative and investigative play well with plenty of opportunities for children to choose what they want to do for themselves. Children's curiosity about and understanding of the world around them develops well. For example, children showed a keen interest in using magnifying glasses to examine leaves and items collected on the previous day's visit to a parkland area. They enjoy growing vegetables and flowers, tending them carefully and watching them change.
- The best learning observed was when teachers challenged the children well in story sessions by ensuring that all were fully involved. However, this is not consistent because staff do not always demand more of the children by asking follow-up questions or requiring more detailed answers. This impacts adversely on the development of a wider, more accurate and imaginative vocabulary.
- Teaching assistants are very valued members of the staff team. Generally, their work is effective, especially when supporting disabled pupils and those who have more complex special educational needs. This work is consistently good and with some very strong elements. On rare occasions, though, staff are not focused enough on teaching children particular skills and put too much emphasis on activities that children choose for themselves which lack the structure required to promote more rapid progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils is good**

- The children enjoy being at nursery. They form strong bonds with the adults around them as seen in their enjoyment of celebrating a member of staff's birthday. The numerous hugs given and cards received were testament to the close relationships everyone has. Children trust the staff completely, as do their parents and carers.
- Children learn to keep themselves and others safe in different situations. They play with toys and climbing and balancing equipment, learning their own boundaries and how to manage risk. Scissors and spades are used safely. Children move around the nursery in a sensible manner, treating objects and people with care.
- Children's enthusiasm for learning and their ability to share, take turns and be polite helps them to behave well. Of particular value is the well-organised arrangement for 'family' lunches. The children sit in small groups with an adult and develop good social skills. This is seen in their unprompted use of 'please' and 'thank you' when someone helps them or asks them something and in their good use of cutlery and enjoyment of healthy school meals.

- The school's policies and procedures are clear and effectively support the children's safety. Children are well aware of the importance of being kind to one another and have confidence in adults to help deal with any upsets.
- Although behaviour is good overall, a few children do not have enough confidence in their learning. Sometimes, they wait for others to do things for them, or do not make a lot of effort to join in or give detailed answers to questions.
- The school encourages regular attendance and emphasises the benefits gained by the children.

### **The leadership and management** is good

- The main strength of the school is the quality of relationships it has with everyone it works with. The headteacher, senior leaders and staff are very committed to the school and its community. They have developed numerous links with a range of groups and external agencies, including social services, to ensure that all appropriate support is provided. The family support worker provides very effective help to particularly vulnerable families and this benefits the whole community.
- The school has a very strong relationship with parents and carers, and with the local community. All of those spoken to during the inspection, and the feedback from the school's recent questionnaire, show families appreciate the quality of care and education provided. They believe their children really enjoy attending and particularly like using the outdoor play space. Several parents and carers note they have chosen for their children to come to this nursery from outside the usual area.
- The school helps children settle in very well. Adults are flexible and responsive to the children's needs. Staff are proud of their reputation for preparing the children well for the next stage of education. The local authority has sufficient confidence in the school to have a 'light touch' approach to its support. Its support has a positive impact in maintaining the good quality of teaching.
- The special educational needs coordinator provides high quality management of this area and contributes well to school leadership as a whole. She provides very effective support for individual children and works closely with a team of skilled and experienced support staff who meet the needs of disabled children and those who have special educational needs in a very effective manner.
- The impact of leaders at all levels is good. This is reflected in the data about the progress children make and the good quality of teaching. The staff are largely long-serving and confident in what they are doing. However, as many staff have worked closely together for some time, they sometimes struggle to stand back from events and rigorously monitor and evaluate what is provided.
- The school plans a range of activities that engage the children and support their learning and development across all areas. Staff discuss together what they are going to do but the recording of such plans is not always effective in identifying exactly what the children are to learn. This leads occasionally to too much emphasis on activities that children choose for themselves at the expense of adult-led tasks that develop children's skills in key areas. This is occasionally reflected in less effective teaching.

- Systems are in place to monitor the performance of staff, and these are appropriately linked to training. The school makes use of its links with the University of Derby as part of a group of local nurseries that work together to improve what is provided for children in the area.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning lack sufficient rigour. While observations of teaching are made, the recording is informal and does not always identify the quality of what was seen or specific areas for improvement.
- Assessment data are collected about the progress children make, but these are not always managed effectively. Staff are not always confident in using such information to identify what improvements could be made in teaching and learning.
- Children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted successfully through a range of different activities, including the extensive use of stories. This is also reflected in the good moral code seen when eating together and the enjoyment of the environment developed through Forest School activities. Staff make good use of local links to celebrate a range of festivals including Diwali and Eid.
- Procedures to safeguard the children meet current requirements. Staff ensure children have equal access to activities and the school fosters good relationships and tackles discrimination. With the consolidation of activities in recent years and the staff commitment to the community, the school shows that it has the capacity to continue to improve.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance of the school is good with governors clearly appreciative of the school’s many pastoral strengths. Governors are very supportive of the school with several undertaking additional training to ensure that they continue to develop their skills and that new ideas are considered. They have ensured that funding is used effectively to provide a good number of qualified and experienced staff, which is making a positive impact on the progress made, particularly for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The governing body is familiar with the quality of teaching in the school and supports school leaders in managing teachers’ performance. Governors help to ensure that pay matches performance. Governors are developing the knowledge and skills to challenge leaders and hold them to account for the school’s performance. They try to ensure that they are not too dependent on senior leaders for information, and are able to stand back and challenge the school where necessary. Governors ensure that all safety and safeguarding requirements are met and are currently working hard to ensure school policies are reviewed more rigorously.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	112471
<b>Local authority</b>	Derby
<b>Inspection number</b>	424956

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	71
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lisa Bailey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christine McCrone
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 December 2010
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