

Monkchester Road Nursery School

Monkchester Road, Walker, Tyne and Wear, NE6 2LJ

Inspection dates 20–21 November 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher and other leaders instils total dedication from everyone involved with the Nursery to ensure 'every moment counts' and children get off to the best possible start.
- The school is at the centre of the community and a source of immense and deserved pride. It provides a haven for all children because of its meticulous focus on meeting children's needs and the support it provides to parents.
- Achievement is outstanding because all children are extremely well supported to make excellent gains in all areas of their development and are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Teaching is outstanding because expectations are high and staff are highly skilled in using very imaginative approaches that inspire children and extend their experiences of the world around them.
- Children's ideas are valued and harnessed to develop their communication and thinking skills, independence, imagination and creativity extremely well.
- Staff are extremely adept in assessing and developing children's learning through play and teaching directly to small groups.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. They are absorbed in activities and staff are excellent role models helping children to quickly settle into Nursery. Staff provide a safe and welcoming place for children to begin their learning journey.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. As a result, the school has gone from strength to strength since the previous inspection. It reviews its work rigorously and leaves no stone unturned in its relentless pursuit of excellence.
- The school has yet to extend its links fully with other schools and agencies in order to share its exemplary practice.
- Monkchester is a special place where the joy of learning is shared by children and staff alike.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 18 learning sessions provided by teachers as well as Early Years support staff.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and assistant headteacher and two other leaders, three members of the governing body and a local authority representative.
- Some of the Nursery school's documentation was scrutinised, including children's learning journals, teachers' planning and safeguarding procedures, progress data, the monitoring of teaching and other documents relating to the school's work.
- The inspector considered 54 responses to the school's recent survey and discussed parents' views towards the school at the beginning and end of school sessions. The response to the invitation to participate to the online Parent View survey was low as there were only four responses.
- The inspector considered responses to the 13 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Kevin Dodd, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average-sized nursery.
- Children join the school the term after their third birthday.
- The majority of children are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language but there is an increasingly wide range of other cultures represented in the school.
- The proportion of disabled children and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The school shares its site and works in partnership with the Monkchester Nursery Family Centre Playgroup and Out of School Club. This provision is subject to a separate inspection by Ofsted.
- Eight new staff have been appointed since the last inspection.
- The Nursery is recognised as a leading sustainable school and holds the eco-schools Green Flag, the Healthy School Status and the full International School Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- The school has already identified areas for improvement and is currently addressing these very effectively. It would benefit from considering formalising links with other schools to share exemplary practice and provide further development opportunities for staff through involvement in initiatives such as the National Leader of Education programme and Teaching Schools.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children join the Nursery with knowledge and skills that are well below that expected for their age. Rapid progress leads to almost all leaving the Nursery with skills expected for their age and a significant minority exceed these expectations.
- Children are all very well prepared for entry to their Reception classes because they are well supported to gain high levels of confidence and well developed communication, early literacy and numeracy skills. All groups of children make exceptional progress because staff provide an exciting range of activities and are extremely skilled at building on children's interests and previous learning.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs make excellent progress. Early assessments ensure that staff identify children's needs quickly so that work begins immediately on helping them to become successful learners. Children at the early stages of learning English receive very effective support, make rapid gains in acquiring English and achieve at least as well as their peers.
- Boys enter Nursery at levels below the girls in most areas but their progress is accelerated so that the gaps on entry are closing by the end of year.
- The learning of more-able children is extended through more demanding activities and tasks. They have a thirst for learning and rise to the challenges set.
- Personal development is accelerated because of the high quality, sensitive support given by staff and children settle very quickly. Children develop the social skills to work cooperatively and deepen their understanding of the needs of others. They learn to persevere with tasks and to make some decisions for themselves.
- Children make great strides in their language and communication skills because there is a wealth of real experiences to talk about. Adults seize every opportunity to further children's speaking and understanding through discussion, by joining in children's role play and by providing interesting practical tasks, stimulating stories, rhymes and songs.
- Children make an excellent start in understanding that letters represent sounds and, by the time they leave Nursery, many learn to combine sounds to read simple words.
- Children have excellent opportunities for mark-making using paint, felt tip pens and pencils. They record their ideas using notepads and clipboards as well as drawing on large sheets of paper. Children are already beginning to use sounds and letters in their early writing.
- Mathematical skills develop rapidly. Children use a good range of resources to develop counting skills and activities provide many practical opportunities to develop a good understanding of the properties of shapes and measurement.
- Children make exceptional progress in their physical development as they practise balancing, climbing and riding wheeled vehicles. The jabadao gym fires children's imagination, for example when they work together using objects to make and play on a 'bus'. This provides excellent opportunities for them to develop their handling skills.
- Promoting creativity underpins all the school does. Children are extremely imaginative because adults value their ideas and skilfully help them to put ideas into action. For example, staff have helped them with practical skills and provided an excellent range of tools and materials for children to choose from to create and maintain garden and forest areas.
- The rich curriculum supports children's understanding of the world extremely well for example for arousing children's curiosity about their own and other cultures through making 'barfi sweets' and decorating 'mehndi hands'. Visits to farms and a 'teddy bear' factory also extend children's understanding exceptionally well.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Observations of children’s learning are used exceptionally well to support individual children, including disabled children, those with special educational needs, and those who are learning English as an additional language, as well as more-able children. Adults have high expectations of what each child can achieve.
- All staff are extremely knowledgeable about the most effective ways that children of this age learn and develop. They provide very stimulating activities precisely matched to children’s different needs. Parents correctly consider that teaching is of a high quality and that their children make excellent progress.
- Excellent relationships between adults and children help the children make the most of their time in Nursery. There is something new to learn every day and adults promote children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. As a result, children develop a sense of wonder in the world around them as when, for instance, they take delight in a letter and gifts left in the forest area by ‘fairies,’ to thank them for tidying up.
- Staff listen to children, understand their interests extremely well and use questions and conversations to develop and extend their ideas.
- A perfect balance of adult-led and child-selected activities ensures children are able to learn just as successfully through listening to and watching adults as by learning through play. For example, adult-led group sessions successfully introduce phonics (knowledge of sounds and their letters) and then children are helped to apply their learning during play.
- Throughout the day, adults are actively interacting, talking, questioning, developing language and guiding children’s learning as children explore and investigate for themselves. Adults are very adept when joining in children’s play and extending their learning. This was evident when a group of children began playing with a pile of buttons and an adult joined them to suggest ways of sorting.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Children’s behaviour is outstanding because they are fully involved and interested; playing and learning from the first time they arrive.
- There are excellent settling-in arrangements. Opportunities for parents to spend time with their children at the start of sessions ensure children feel safe and secure.
- Children love the Nursery and attend regularly. They thrive in the safe and secure atmosphere and parents are unanimous that their children are safe while there. No evidence of bullying or racist incidents was seen during the inspection, and school records confirm that there are none.
- The wide range of activities in the very well organised and attractive indoor and outdoor areas have a very positive impact on engendering the development of both boys’ and girls’ love of learning. The calm and purposeful atmosphere is the result of excellent relationships and the right levels of challenge for all children. Children are confident there is always someone to help them if they need it.
- Children are very well cared for and put on their boots and waterproof clothes when playing in the outside area in wet weather. They know routines very well and quickly respond to adults’ requests for ‘quieter indoor voice, please’ if they become over-excited.
- Children learn how to judge what is safe for them, having learned about safety in their work and play both indoors and outside. They carefully use scissors to cut paper and tape, and use gardening tools with equal precision.
- Children flourish at lunchtime because staff ensure this is an enjoyable, relaxed and social occasion where good manners and conversation are encouraged.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school has improved rapidly since the previous inspection. Under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, the areas for improvement noted previously have been addressed. The

school has adjusted its provision extremely well so that all children's needs are fully met in 'communication friendly spaces.'

- The headteacher's drive, clarity of vision and commitment are fully recognised and shared by staff and governors. The headteacher and other senior and middle leaders share their expertise extremely well and this is having an excellent impact on staff training and development and ensures new staff quickly become part of a highly effective team.
- The leadership of teaching is outstanding. Senior and middle leaders keep a very close eye on the effectiveness of the Nursery and are continually challenging themselves to do better. Recent training on critical and creative thinking has had a marked impact on children's achievement in this area.
- The performance of teachers and other staff is excellently managed and all staff respond very positively to opportunities to further develop their skills. Senior leaders use information from checks on teaching to ensure that staff pay is linked to the quality of teaching and contributes to improvements in children's achievement.
- Partnerships are excellent and enable parents to be very successfully involved in their children's development. The staff share children's work in their 'learning journals' with parents to show how children are learning and the 'tell us tree' helps parents contribute to children's assessments. They also provide excellent support through family learning sessions and links with the Family Centre. Parents are regularly encouraged to give their views on how the school can be improved and senior leaders act on suggestions.
- The school has effective links with other schools. It shares its practice with them and staff also visit other nurseries to learn from their expertise although there are few formal links to provide development opportunities for staff.
- The local authority's support has been highly effective largely through the range of specialists provided to support children's needs, in monitoring teaching, safeguarding and day-care provision. It has also had a particularly good impact on helping to promote links with other nurseries and feeder schools.
- Central to the school's success is the staff's ability to ensure that every child has an equal chance to shine and succeed. The backgrounds and different abilities of the children are respected, celebrated and valued both in the Nursery setting and through involvement with African schools through the International School Award.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body fulfils its duties well. Members of the governing body bring a broad range of expertise and provide strong support and challenge. They ask searching questions and check the progress and attainment of individual children and groups, fully understanding the school's exemplary assessment systems and the high quality of teaching. They make excellent use of finances, for example, by pooling resources with the Family Centre to extend provision. They make sure spending decisions have a positive impact on children's progress such as using funding to provide children with free school meals. They provide additional hours of support and decide whether teachers and staff should be rewarded with pay increases. Governors ensure that all safeguarding requirements are fully met.

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	108431
Local authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	430896

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	126
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bernie Matthews
Headteacher	Anne Humble
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2011
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