

# Sir James Knott Memorial Nursery School

Percy Square, River View, Tynemouth, North Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE30 4AG

**Inspection dates** 11–12 December 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Children are well prepared for their move to primary school.
- Children make good progress overall and some make outstanding progress in social development.
- Teaching is good and occasionally outstanding. This is because teachers plan an environment which contains a wide range of exciting learning opportunities in which the children learn well.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Children are polite and show high levels of self-control, as well as a developing sense of how to keep themselves and others safe.
- The leadership of the executive headteacher is outstanding. She has driven rapid school improvement through making improving teaching the top priority.
- The governing body makes a good contribution to leadership because it now receives good information on which it bases sound decisions. The addition of an expert governor from an outstanding school has helped to strengthen the importance of governors setting out a clear strategy for school improvement. This contributes to increasing achievement and the success of the nursery.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Children occasionally spend unnecessarily long periods of time in a large group sitting listening to the teacher and their interest and attention are not always sustained.
- The role of the teaching assistant in promoting children's learning is not always clear. This means that occasionally opportunities to extend learning are lost.
- Systems to collect detailed data about children's progress, on which to base priorities for school improvement, are not yet fully established.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed four lessons and two short nativity plays as well as observing children learning indoors and outdoors in small groups with teachers or teaching assistants. The majority of observations were made jointly with the executive headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the executive headteacher, staff, a representative of the local authority as well as the Chair of the Governing Body designate, a parent governor and two parents.
- The inspector observed the school's work, listened to children read, looked at children's learning journals, progress data, safeguarding information and other documents relating to the school's work.
- The inspector considered 24 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View, and a letter and an e-mail from parents as well as 15 questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Pauline Hilling-Smith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized nursery school.
- The majority of children are White British and very few speak English as an additional language.
- A few children from a nearby refuge attend the school each year for between two weeks and three months.
- The proportion of children with special educational needs at Early Years Action is below average. The proportion at Early Years Action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school offers breakfast and after school clubs which extend provision.
- A new executive headteacher was appointed in September 2012 and staff numbers had to be reduced at this point due to rationalisation of the budget.

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

- Improve teaching so that it is never less than consistently good and more is outstanding by:
  - ensuring that when working in large groups, tasks and learning hold the children's attention and interest
  - checking that the role of teaching assistants in extending children's learning is always clear.
- Improve leadership and management by embedding systems to collect data about children's progress even further and using this information to set future priorities.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- When children join the nursery their attainment ranges from above what is typically expected for their age to sometimes below. Generally, it is in line with what is typical overall. All children make good progress in their learning and the majority exceed expected levels of learning by the time they transfer to primary school.
- Data for 2013 shows that the majority of children exceeded expectations by the time they leave in personal, social and emotional development, communication and language and physical development and over a third exceed expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Each year many children join the nursery with good levels in their ability to express themselves. Learning in this area is promoted and children's imagination and creativity develop well.
- Some children join the nursery with less experience of playing and learning with many children rather than learning on an individual basis or in a very small group. This means that they are sometimes at an immature level in their social development. However, these children make swift and often outstanding progress because this area of learning is prioritised especially in the autumn term.
- Children make good progress in learning to read and write because teachers provide important reasons for them to attempt writing, such as composing a list for Santa. When children read their work to staff every opportunity is taken to capitalise on the teaching of letters and the sounds they make.
- Teachers put a strong focus on the promotion of mathematical concepts. Children benefit from singing rhymes, playing number games and learn to count, ensuring that they touch an item as they say the number, and putting numerals in the correct order.
- All children make good progress in physical development and well-being because the school provides many opportunities for children to play outdoors on large equipment and for children to practise large and small movements. For example, 'Squiggle when you Wiggle' sessions are much enjoyed. This means that children's physical development enables them to keep pace with expressing their high levels of creativity through making and doing.
- The school's data show that disabled children and those with special educational needs, those from the refuge and younger summer born children made at least as good progress as their peers and as a result the gap in attainment between them and their peers closed.
- The very few who speak English as an additional language are welcomed and settle happily. Staff ensure they understand what is happening and they soon start to speak a few words and play a full part in daily life.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the on line questionnaire Parent View strongly agreed that their children made good progress.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching has been a priority for the nursery and it is now good and enables children to make good progress.
- A key strength is the way staff share information each week about children's progress and interests so that planning for learning is firmly based on activities that will engage the children. Planning also identifies what children need to learn next. This careful attention to children's needs and motivating the children is what drives the good progress that they make.
- New systems to record children's progress are used effectively to identify individual progress but information is not yet being analysed sharply enough to identify overall priorities for the nursery.
- Staff fully understand that children need to lead their learning and they are skilled at knowing when to offer help and become involved and when to step back and allow children to discover for themselves. For example, the adult alongside children who were building a house from the

plans they had made waited patiently while two children wound out a canopy which was to be the roof.

- Teaching assistants often offer useful support to children. However, the role of the teaching assistant in promoting children's learning is not always clear which means that occasionally opportunities to extend learning are lost.
- The teaching of early phonics (the sounds that letters make) is good because children find the actions they make to represent sounds memorable and as a result they make good progress in learning to read. Children who are able readers are extended well and enjoy reading books to adults.
- Children learn effectively when they are in small groups or selecting their own activities. Teachers ensure that when teaching the group as a whole, tasks are interesting but, occasionally, children spend unnecessarily long periods of time in a large group sitting listening to the teacher which limits the time available for them to get on with other worthwhile tasks.
- Staff are given good information about the needs of children with specific needs and they provide appropriate levels of supervision to help the children make the same good progress as others in the nursery. Such support enables the children to confidently respond to encouragement and take important steps in their development. Staff form good relationships with the families of children who have special needs, which further supports the good progress of the children.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Behaviour is outstanding because children are expected to follow the rules and routines they are taught that help the nursery to run well. For example, they use their developing self-control so that they do not climb beyond a certain height when they step up behind a wall to look over at the ships on the river. School records show that minor incidents of misbehaviour are very rare and there is no evidence of bullying at all.
- Children are well behaved and polite when they make visits out of school. They quickly develop a sense of their own and others' safety and often receive compliments about their conduct, such as when they visited Whitehouse farm.
- Children develop excellent attitudes to learning. They enter the nursery at the start of each session eager to explore the wide range of activities planned for them. They are active learners who relish finding out things for themselves, and many delight in sharing their learning with adults and other children.
- Children play happily together, sharing resources and taking turns as they have been taught to do by adults. For example, each child in a small group became a character and acted out their part of the Christmas story when it came to their turn.
- Children's confidence to explore is based on their strong feelings of safety and security within the nursery environment. They have complete trust in adults to look after them and keep them safe. Parents unanimously agree that their children are safe in the nursery and one parent said that her child thought the staff 'were marvellous'. As a consequence, it is not surprising that children attend regularly and arrive on time.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The executive headteacher is an exceptional leader. Through her inspiration and expertise as a national leader, and with the help of the support of her own school she has ensured that children's achievement has not been affected by staffing changes and rationalisation. She is ably supported in this school by the office manager and senior teacher together.
- The management of staff performance is effective and findings used to identify where further training is needed. Leadership and the effective monitoring of teaching have ensured that the quality of teaching continues to improve and teachers are determined to be the best they can

be. All staff are now held to account for children's progress, and as their questionnaires confirm they all feel valued.

- Good teamwork enables information about children to be shared, so that all are aware of children's needs and interests. Any child who needs extra help is quickly identified and staff ensure they find ways of helping a child to catch up or overcome any obstacles to good learning. However, systems to collect detailed data about children's progress, on which to base general priorities for school improvement are not yet fully established.
- Children have equal opportunities to succeed. Those with special educational needs and children from the refuge are well supported. They benefit from detailed planning to meet their individual needs and the school works well with a range of other agencies.
- The curriculum is enriched by visits and extended through the before and after school clubs.
- All safeguarding requirements are met. Staff are trained to have a good awareness of risk assessment and child protection.
- The local authority knows the school well and has given an appropriate level of support to ensure that provision has been swiftly returned to a good level following reorganisation.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. One parent wrote to the inspector that he valued highly the fact that staff ensured he knew that no request from parents was ever too much trouble for them.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are increasingly well informed about the quality of teaching, the management of staff performance and how teachers are rewarded. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses, and how rigorously these are being tackled. Data on progress is checked and governors have a good understanding of how well the nursery is doing. They have played a full role in tackling the challenges faced by the school as a result of reorganisation of other schools in the community. Finances are now managed efficiently and governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are robust and regular health and safety checks keep children and adults safe on site.

## 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>	108563
<b>Local authority</b>	North Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	425905

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>	3–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	128
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ken McMillan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lesley Colthart
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 February 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 2005438
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