

Langley Moor Nursery School

Brandon Lane, Langley Moor, Durham, DH7 8LL

Inspection dates

21–22 January 2014

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.

- Children achieve well from their individual starting points. Most have a good level of development by the time they complete their Nursery experience.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs make good and occasionally exceptional progress.
- Behaviour is outstanding, because children make rapid progress developing their personal, social and emotional skills. Children are considerate, kind, polite and keen to learn.
- The school provides high-quality care which ensures children are kept safe and feel safe. All parents agree.
- Teaching is good and occasionally outstanding. Staff often show high levels of skill in developing children's speaking, listening and language skills.
- All staff share the high ambitions of the recently appointed headteacher. Good leadership of teaching ensures improvement priorities are addressed successfully.
- Partnerships with parents are first class and the relaxed relationships help to ensure that children achieve at least well.
- Strong governance has an accurate grasp of school performance. Governors challenge and support leaders in positive ways and this is adding to the school's drive to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Teachers occasionally overlook opportunities to extend and reinforce children's knowledge and understanding through added questioning and the resources they use.
- Opportunities to add to reading, writing and mathematical skills are sometimes missed for children that are ready to do more.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning across morning and afternoon sessions on both days. Five sessions were observed jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector completed a scrutiny of children's learning journals and the school's progress information with the headteacher.
- The inspector spoke with children and had discussions with the headteacher, staff, parents, four governors including one parent governor and the local authority educational development partner.
- The inspector examined a range of documents including those related to safeguarding, self-review, the monitoring of staff performance, the school's improvement plan and records relating to children's progress and behaviour.
- The inspector took account of 23 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and eight staff questionnaire responses.

Inspection team

Clive Petts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Langley Moor is smaller than the average-sized nursery. It offers flexible provision between 8.30am and 3.15pm for 39 full-time-equivalent places.
- Almost all children are White British, with very few at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of children supported through early action is broadly average. The proportion of children supported through early action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Most children have one year in Nursery before transferring to a Reception class in other schools.
- The school provides additional 'wrap-around' care over lunchtime for families.
- The Chair of the Governing Body is a National Leader of Governance.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that excites and inspires children to make certain that a pattern of rapid progress is sustained over time, by:
 - ensuring all resources, whether indoors or outdoors, stretch children's thinking, imagination, knowledge and understanding
 - using questioning more effectively to encourage children to work things out for themselves
 - maximising opportunities for children to add to their reading, writing and mathematical skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- From starting points that are below those typical for their age, including in communication and language skills, children make good progress to achieve well. By the end of Nursery, most children achieve a good level in all areas of learning. The proportion of children exceeding what is expected for their age is increasing steadily, especially in their social and emotional development. This is because the most-able children are provided with a good level of challenge.
- In communication, language and literacy, children make good progress. They identify letters and sounds quickly because staff model and practise letters, sounds and words continuously in fun ways. Thought-provoking activities, such as naming vegetables and fruits before writing a shopping list for the supermarket, help children to understand new words.
- Good progress is made acquiring early reading and writing skills. Most children can write their name by the end of Nursery. Most-able children can write a short list of words. Nevertheless, opportunities are sometimes missed to practise children's skills in all activity areas and use resources to reinforce their knowledge and understanding.
- Children make good progress developing their mathematical skills. They learn to sing rhymes which involve counting numbers from one to five before identifying each figure on a number line. Most-able children are capable of recognising that zero comes before one. Counting the cuddly penguin soft toys to see if there are enough for each member of the group is enjoyed immensely every day.
- A wide range of creative materials used both indoors and outdoors encourages children to be imaginative and follow their curiosity. For example, shredded paper was used to simulate a snowstorm during a great bear hunt.
- Rapid progress is made by children in developing their personal, social, emotional and physical skills, often with high achievement in these areas. This includes children with complex needs, including those who are disabled. Consequently, children develop excellent self-control, independence and perseverance, which prepares them really well for primary school.
- As a rule, all groups of children make the same rate of progress. This includes boys and girls and children learning English as an additional language. This demonstrates the headteacher's commitment to ensuring all children have an equal opportunity to achieve their full potential, effectively targeting any gaps in their individual skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Children supported through early action, early action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs make good progress; in individual cases, they make outstanding progress. This is because their needs are quickly and accurately pinpointed and the support and intervention provided are effective.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Typically in classrooms, children are fully engaged and engrossed in their learning and purposeful play, because adults make sure they offer a broad range of interesting and thought-provoking activities. For example, a group of children became really animated when spotting and then following the glitter trail 'left by the elves' along the garden path.
- Adults are particularly skilled in teaching and supporting children with special educational needs. Activities are thoughtfully planned and arranged to actively engage their interests. As a result, skills and knowledge are added to continuously.
- When children's progress is rapid, it is because teachers:
 - accommodate children's play ideas imaginatively to maximise learning opportunities
 - ensure that tasks pose interesting problems that motivate children to work things out for themselves
 - use probing questions that are tailored to each child's preferred way of learning and

communicating

- follow children's thinking attentively, prompting them to explain and describe their ideas.

■ Learning slows down when:

- there are not enough activities to help children add to their emerging skills in reading, writing and mathematics
- questioning does not check and test children's thinking and ideas enough
- resources are not used effectively enough to spark children's imagination and reinforce their knowledge and understanding.

- Accurate and detailed observations of children's learning and increasingly sharply focused planning of what needs to be learnt next, help to move children's learning forward well. Good action is taken to ensure that the thinking of the most-able children is stretched.
- Highly effective use is made of specialist support providers, such as physiotherapists, to speed up children's learning and adapt activities to meet specific needs. Imaginative use of themes, visits and visitors helps to capture interest and ensure that children are absorbed and engrossed. This was the case, for example, when providing first-hand experiences of exotic animals and insects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

- Children's behaviour is outstanding. They settle quickly, happily and confidently in the warm, welcoming family atmosphere, because the school's work to keep children safe and secure is outstanding. Within a very short space of time, children learn the school routines and become confident and independent. All parents appreciate how safe their children are, and almost all recognise that behaviour is excellent.
- At snack times, children are thoughtful and considerate. They sit down promptly, wait patiently and say 'please' and 'thank you' without prompting. They take turns to choose their piece of fruit or biscuit without any fuss. Children understand that using hand-wash gel before and after eating helps to prevent germs.
- At story time, they sit calmly and attentively on the carpet. They listen intently for extended periods and quickly become engrossed. They confidently ask and answer questions. It is rare that any child shouts out or takes the turn of a friend when answering questions.
- Whether in or outdoors, children engage in purposeful activity and rarely drift from one activity to another. They are capable of sustaining concentration and are prepared to persevere, because they are keen to learn.
- Children are very considerate of one another. This is reinforced by the excellent staff role models. Children display patience and thoughtfulness to disabled children and those with complex needs. They are sensitive and accommodating to their needs, such as when moving in confined spaces.
- The most-able children are provided with good opportunities to develop imaginative forms of play. This includes investigating and exploring without staff help when outside.
- Mean or unkind behaviour is rare, because children have been taught that it is wrong to hurt or upset a friend. Any disagreements are quickly resolved. Children demonstrate confidence going to a member of staff and explaining any worries or concerns that they may have. It is clear that they feel safe and school records back this up completely.
- All parents say that their children thoroughly enjoy coming to school. The happy, friendly atmosphere in the popular lunch club is greatly valued by parents. Children's high attendance confirms their love of the school.

The leadership and management

are good

- The arrival of the new headteacher has been seamless, because her sensitive and perceptive approaches have secured the total commitment of a hard-working team of staff. Expectations have been raised of just how successful the school can be. Together the assistant headteacher, staff and governors strive to ensure that each child can achieve their full potential regardless of starting points. Any form of discrimination is not tolerated.
- Senior leaders are sharply focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Thoughtfully planned training, closely linked to accurately judged improvement priorities, ensures that the quality of each child's learning experience is being improved constantly. This is evident in the accelerating pace of children's progress.
- The highly positive working relationship with parents ensures that 'Stay and play' initial visits are effective in ensuring that children get off to a flying start when they attend school.
- The positive action of the headteacher has added rigour to the quality and accuracy of checks on children's progress. The sharper analysis of the information collected is informing more precisely what improvements can be made to teaching, in order to speed up the rate of progress each child can make. Robust systems are in place to monitor the performance of staff, both teaching and support staff. This ensures that priorities for improvement and training are accurately identified.
- Highly effective partnership working with a range of support agencies ensures that individual children receive the support that they need to raise achievement even more.
- The curriculum is well planned and varied. The excellent provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins children's exceptional personal development. Recent action to increase the variety of experiences for children has enriched the quality of children's outdoor play and learning.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements, with much best practice underpinning the high quality of care and support provided for children.
- The local authority has an accurate view of the school's performance; it provides excellent support for the recently appointed headteacher and appropriate staff training opportunities.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has significantly improved since the previous inspection. The assiduous and well-qualified Chair of the Governing Body makes certain that the expertise and interests of each member of the governing body are deployed effectively. A rolling programme of personalised training is in place for each member. Governors ask challenging questions about children's learning and achievement and demonstrate an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning. They are well aware of the steps they need to take to continue to improve the school's performance. Governors check to see that funding is spent wisely; they ensure that performance management and pay progression are closely linked to classroom performance and children's achievement.

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	113977
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	425907

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	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julia Millard
Headteacher	Susan Simon
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2011
Telephone number	0191 378 0830
Fax number	No Applicable
Email address	langleymoornursery@durhamlearning.net

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