

Ellergreen Early Years Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104506
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	336321
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Pat Kime HMI

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	49
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Wendy Wade
Headteacher	Mrs Maria Eves
Date of previous school inspection	5 September 2006
School address	Ellergreen Road Norris Green Liverpool L11 2RY
Telephone number	0151 2334594
Fax number	0151 2334594
Email address	ellergreen-ht@ellergreen.liverpool.sch.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors visited eight sessions which included both classes in the Nursery, the childcare for children from birth to three years of age, and the breakfast club. They held meetings with staff, parents/carers, and a representative of the governing body. They observed the school's work, examined a range of school documentation, including that related to safeguarding children, and analysed 56 questionnaires returned by parents and carers of children attending the Nursery or the childcare provision.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well the school and childcare provision work in partnership with the on-site children's centre to support children's learning and well-being
- the effectiveness of the arrangements for leading and managing the Nursery
- how well the school is planning for improvement.

Information about the school

Ellergreen Early Years Centre is located in a community centre building in the Norris Green district of Liverpool. It serves an area that is socially and economically disadvantaged. Most of the children are of White British heritage. A very small number of children are learning English as an additional language. The centre has identified approximately 8% of the children in Nursery as having special educational needs and/or disabilities.

This inspection was of: the Nursery school provision; the childcare for children from birth to three years of age; and the extended school provision, the 'wraparound care'. These are part of a range of co-located provision for children and families, which also includes a Children's Centre.

In September 2009, an executive headteacher took charge of the Nursery and its associated day care and extended school provision. She is also in overall charge of the Children's Centre.

The executive headteacher spends half her time at Ellergreen. She is also headteacher of the nearby St Paul and St Timothy's Catholic Infant School. The two schools are developing collaborative arrangements.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Ellergreen Early Years Centre provides a good education and a high quality of care. The children do well. They feel very safe here and they greatly enjoy learning in the calm, encouraging atmosphere. They make at least good progress in all areas of learning and come on particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development. Their horizons are broadened through a wide range of interesting and appealing activities. Children and their families benefit from the links with the on-site children's centre and plans are in hand to strengthen these links in order to provide a more integrated service. Parents' and carers' high regard for the school is well-justified.

On the whole, when children join Ellergreen, they can do less than most children their age, with speech and language often a particularly weak area. By the time they leave the Nursery, children's attainment is broadly in line with what is expected for their age. Their progress is the result of good teaching, a rich curriculum and very good pastoral care. The staff understand young children's needs and have very good relationships with them. They provide activities, indoors and outdoors, which appeal to the children and all of which move their learning on. That said, the indoor provision is wider ranging and generally richer than that offered outdoors.

Most staff have a sound understanding of where the children are up to in their learning and plan suitable activities to move them on. However, records of children's attainment are not all accurate and, in the Nursery, are not always clear about the next steps for each child's learning.

The executive headteacher has already made a positive impact. She has consulted widely about how the centre might develop. She has a clear vision for a network of integrated services to help children and their families to overcome barriers to learning and economic well-being, through education. Staff and governors are behind her in this and they value the developing collaboration with St Paul and St Timothy's. Leaders are now ready to move on to the next stage of development and they recognise the need to underpin it with more rigorous monitoring of the effectiveness of the centre's work and more detailed planning for improvement. They are well-placed to achieve their aims. The improvements seen in the areas raised as shortcomings in the previous reports on the childcare and the Nursery show they have the capacity to do so.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the assessment of what each child can do and the use of this information to support staff and parents and carers to help children take their next steps in learning.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

- Strengthen aspects of the leadership and management of the Nursery, in particular, planning for further improvement in the provision and in the quality of teaching.
- Improve the opportunities for children to learn outdoors, ensuring that the outdoor activities cover all areas of learning and are readily accessible for all the children.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

2

Children achieve well in all areas of learning, very well in their personal development. By the time they leave Nursery, for most, attainment is broadly in line with what is expected for their age. For a few, it is above average. Boys and girls make good progress in learning day by day. They gain confidence, self-esteem and independence and they develop good learning habits and attitudes, such as persistence and problem-solving. Children respond well to the calm atmosphere created by staff; they are well-behaved and usually considerate of others. They learn to get along together, take turns, cooperate and resolve differences amicably. In the childcare and in the Nursery, children who have difficulties with speech and language make particularly rapid progress in this aspect of learning. So do children for whom English is an additional language. This is because both these groups of children benefit from good additional language support. When they leave Nursery, most children are ready to embark confidently on the Reception Year in primary school.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles, how to make healthy choices and to keep safe. For example, they follow good hygiene routines and enjoy healthy food and the younger children have learned about brushing their teeth. Children are very well-involved in the life of the Nursery. For instance, they have drawn their ideas for developing the outdoor area and presented them to the governing body's finance committee.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment ¹	3
The quality of children's learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which children feel safe	1
Children's behaviour	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Children's attendance ¹	2
	3
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

All the teaching seen was of a good quality. Staff build very positive, encouraging relationships with the children. They know them well as individuals. They understand how to help young children to learn from first-hand experiences and they plan activities that move them on in their learning. They create interesting displays and attractive settings for imaginative play that are of a high quality and draw children into learning activities. Staff usually make the most of planned and incidental opportunities to develop children's social skills. At times, however, they miss chances to enrich children's vocabulary, to help them to clarify and articulate their ideas, and to develop their mathematical thinking. Assessments of children's learning and records of their achievements are not used fully effectively to support planning and to ensure that all staff are clear about the next steps in learning for each child. Consequently, there are occasions when challenges are not sufficiently closely matched to some children's needs. The children have a rich diet of interesting activities that are coherently planned so as to be meaningful to them and to interest them in the world around them. For instance, they have been on the bus to visit the park, visited a farm, and worked out how to construct dens outdoors. During the inspection, children enjoyed work in Nursery that was linked to Chinese New Year celebrations. Staff helped children to improve their skills with scissors and glue spreaders as they made lanterns and the children were looking forward to eating with chopsticks. Visitors add greatly to the richness of the curriculum, especially for children's creative development and cultural awareness. The Nursery children have learned from a range of artists and performers, including photographers and members of the city's symphony orchestra. The curriculum provides a balanced range of activities across all areas of learning indoors. However, the outdoor provision in Nursery and in the childcare, though good for children's physical development, is less extensive than that indoors.

Taken overall, the care, guidance and support provided are good, pastoral care especially so. The arrangements to enable parents and carers to support their children's learning and well-being are developing through the drive to provide more integrated services but, as yet, these are not embedded. Children know that the staff care about them and will always help them and make things better if they are upset. Good safety and hygiene routines are well-established. There are some good links between the different elements of the provision. For example, Nursery staff routinely inform staff at

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

the after-school provision about any children's difficulties, their achievements and any accidents. They back this up with written messages and/or by text to parents and carers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

There are several strengths in leadership and management across the provision, with two key factors which bode well for the future. First, the executive headteacher has a clear vision for development which is aimed at improving the lives of children and their families and she has the support of staff and governors for this. Second, the foundations of teamwork across the provision are in place and staff have begun to share best practice in whichever element of the provision it originates. For example, there is a close working relationship between the executive headteacher and the coordinator of the children's centre and a cross-provision early years team has recently been established. Links in governance across the Nursery, the childcare and the children's centre are good. The governing body has a good grasp of strengths and weaknesses and is involved well in planning for the future. However, at present, each element of the provision undertakes separate evaluation of its effectiveness and planning for improvement. For the Nursery, while this planning shows a clear sense of direction, the underpinning evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of the current provision lacks detail and planning is sketchy about how intentions will be brought to fruition. The collaboration with St Paul and St Timothy's is strengthening the wider leadership capacity, particularly in the Nursery.

The Nursery and the childcare work in good partnership with other agencies to support children and their families and to enable children to have equal opportunities to learn. Staff direct parents and carers to relevant provision available at the children's centre. Consistent, well-targeted language enrichment activities are provided for children who have difficulties with speech and language, whatever element of the centre's provision they attend. The partnerships with other schools and the centre's work with families contribute to the good promotion of community cohesion. Additionally, the many visitors who enrich the curriculum are drawn from a range of cultural, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds and this helps the children to learn to value diversity. The arrangements for safeguarding children meet all requirements and are appropriately

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

stringent for this multi-use site.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

The chart below shows that parents and carers are extremely satisfied with the school and the childcare. Several parents and carers added written comments in praise of the school. The common themes in these were:

- how much their children enjoyed learning
- how safe their children felt
- the support children and parents and carers received from the very approachable staff.

Two parents or carers had individual points about which they disagreed and these areas were discussed with the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ellergreen Early Years Centre to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 49 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	84	9	16	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	50	89	5	9	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	41	73	15	27	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	77	13	23	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	47	84	9	16	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	79	10	18	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	77	13	23	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	37	66	14	25	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	82	10	18	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	77	11	20	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	43	77	13	23	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	46	82	10	18	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	52	93	4	7	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its children. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well children acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



12 February 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Ellergreen Early Years Centre, Liverpool, L11 2RY

You may remember Mrs Cooper and me. We visited your school recently to see how well you are all learning and Mrs Pepper came with us to learn more about how schools are inspected. We all enjoyed our visit very much. Thank you for making us welcome in your school. This letter is to tell you the main things we found out about your school.

You go to a good school. No wonder your parents and carers are so pleased with how well you are doing and how happy you are at school. You enjoy all the interesting things there are to do at Nursery and in the childcare and you are all learning new things every day. The adults take very good care of you and teach you well. You learn a lot about how to keep healthy and safe. You like the healthy food and you get plenty of exercise at school. We were glad to hear that you feel very safe at school. We were impressed by your sensible, considerate behaviour and by how well you concentrate.

The staff want to make Ellergreen even better. We and Mrs Eves agreed about the most important things to do that. First, to plan improvements very carefully so that everyone knows what they have to do to make them happen. Second, to make sure that all the adults in school and your parents know exactly what you can do and what you need to learn next. Third, to provide even more activities to help you learn outdoors.

I am sure that you will have good ideas to help improve these things and the grown ups will want to hear them.

Yours sincerely

Pat Kime

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.