

Inspection of Borough Road Nursery School

Borough Road, Darlington, County Durham DL1 1SG

Inspection dates: 4–5 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Borough Road Nursery School has been transformed since the last inspection. Leaders have addressed areas of weakness and built on previous strengths. School leaders and staff have created a family-friendly atmosphere. This is a place where 'precious moments' are captured and built on. Children are happy, confident, creative and enthusiastic learners.

Children are safe and thrive in a caring and supportive environment. They behave well. Children look after equipment and know to tidy up after themselves. They are considerate of others and play well alongside and with other children. Staff are skilled in dealing with upsets and mishaps.

Children really stick to their tasks and are keen to share their learning. Teachers plan sessions that help children succeed in their learning. Children are listened to attentively. They explore a range of activities and respond well to questions from grown-ups. Staff keep records of learning and celebrate success. Parents and carers appreciate the school and how it helps them to support their children.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Staff and governors are determined that children at Borough Road Nursery School make the best possible start to their education. Children leave the Nursery ready for their next school. Staff plan exciting activities to build on children's interests. They know what steps children need to take next in their learning. They make sure children know what they need to before they move them on to more demanding work. Children's behaviour is exemplary and there is no bullying. They go about their daily business in a tranquil, safe and calm environment.

Developing children's reading, speaking and listening is at the heart of what the school does. Strengthening communication and language skills drives planning. Staff have built the curriculum around a range of books, rhymes and songs. These grab the interest of children. Book areas in the classrooms and communal areas are inviting. They are full of high-quality books and props. Parents get involved with stories and rhymes through sessions in the school. They can take story bags home. Children get to know these stories inside out. This excites children and helps them in the rest of their play and learning. Children enjoy sharing books with their friends and reading on their own. Children and staff enjoy story and rhyme times.

Adults teach phonics throughout the day. They make sure that children listen to and identify a range of letter sounds as they go about their play. Leaders check all children's progress to ensure that no one falls behind. Staff show children how to listen and follow instructions. Adults change the words they use and the questions that they ask according to the ability of the child. Adults help children to extend their vocabulary using imaginative resources, songs and rhymes. Some adults

sometimes miss opportunities to do this. They are sometimes not accurate in their choice of words.

Staff foster children's curiosity in mathematics. They build the teaching of mathematics into the daily routine. They encourage children to count. They help them develop mathematical language. They teach them to identify shapes and solve mathematical problems through play.

Staff know and understand the children well. Children have their needs met and their interests built on. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do well. Staff work well with parents and outside agencies. Staff involve children with SEND in all aspects of school life.

Staff encourage parents to make their children attend the school as much as possible. They encourage the importance of setting good routines. They help to get them ready for when the children start at Reception classes elsewhere.

Staff appreciate senior leaders' help and guidance with their ongoing training. They appreciate the consideration that they give to their personal circumstances. They feel valued and work well as a team.

Governors know the school well. They are supportive of the headteacher. They have helped transform the school since the last inspection. Governors have a good understanding of what the headteacher wants to achieve. They ask the headteacher difficult questions to help improve the school further.

A range of books, resources and visits help children understand the world around them. Children learn about diverse peoples, families and cultures. Teachers consider themes about emotions and well-being when selecting individual books. More could be done to develop this aspect.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders make sure staff keep safeguarding at the forefront of their minds. Staff get regular updates and face-to-face training. All staff know their responsibilities to keep children safe. Leaders carry out checks on staff to ensure that they are safe to work with children. Extensive systems identify and help those children who need extra help. Health, safety and welfare requirements are met.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff do not have a shared understanding of the key vocabulary that children need to learn. They sometimes miss opportunities to extend children's vocabulary. At times they use vocabulary incorrectly. This means that children

do not extend their vocabulary as well as they could. Leaders must ensure that staff share the same high expectations and apply these agreed expectations consistently.

- Curriculum planning does not always present a secure overview of personal development themes to be taught. School leaders cannot be sure what aspects of personal development, such as social, emotional, moral, cultural and fundamental values are being addressed. Leaders must agree a clear overview of those aspects that are already being covered and take action required to address any gaps in planning in areas of children’s personal development.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child’s school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, ‘[disadvantaged pupils](#)’ refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 113982 |
| Local authority | Darlington |
| Inspection number | 10121692 |
| Type of school | Nursery |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 2 to 5 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 72 |
| Appropriate authority | Local authority |
| Chair of governing body | Stephen Harker |
| Headteacher | Helen Dummett (Executive headteacher) |
| Website | www.boroughroad.darlington.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 14–15 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school now has an executive headteacher and the deputy executive headteacher.
- This is a smaller-than-average sized school.
- The school federated with George Dent Nursery School on 7 November 2017.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We looked at a range of documents including those relating to attendance and safeguarding. We also checked the school's central record, which includes the checks made on staff to ensure that they are safe to work with children.
- We talked with children in sessions. We also spoke with the executive headteacher, other senior staff, key educators and support staff. In addition, the governing body, representatives from the local authority and the school improvement partner were also spoken with.

- We looked at the 26 responses to Ofsted’s parent questionnaire, Parent View. The inspectors spoke to several staff individually about what it is like to work at the school and reviewed the responses to Ofsted’s staff survey.
- We looked in depth at communication and language development, literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and physical development. We visited the two-year-old and Nursery classes.

Inspection team

Jonathan Brown, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Heather Mensah

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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