



Inspection report

Monkchester Road Nursery School and Family Centre

Unique Reference Number 108431
LEA Newcastle Upon Tyne

Inspection number 269344
Inspection dates 10 - 11 November 2004
Reporting inspector Martin Bradley HMI

Inspection carried out under section 3 of the School Inspection Act 1996, and was deemed section 10 under the same act.

Type of School	Nursery School and Family Centre	School address	Monkchester Road, Walker, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE6 2LJ
School category	Nursery	Telephone number	0191 2654579
Age range of pupils	2½ - 5 years	Fax number	0191 2650905
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Chair of governors	Mrs B Matthews
Number on roll	104	Headteacher	Ms J Herron
Appropriate authority	The governing body		
Date of previous inspection	March 1999		

Age group	Published	Reference no.
2½ - 5	December 2004	269344

Introduction

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in its consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of the staff of Monkchester Road Nursery School and Family Centre and of the local education authority.

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

The nursery opened in 1974 and most of the 104 children attend full time. They come from the Walker and Byker wards of Newcastle where there are very high levels of unemployment and where neighbourhoods are amongst some of the poorest in the country. Seventy percent of the children are eligible for free school meals. There are four classes each staffed by a teacher and a nursery nurse. Children enter the school aged between 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ and 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ having either three or six terms in the nursery. The nursery has significantly expanded the services provided on site in recent years. A Family Centre opened in 2000 and is managed and run by a Charitable Trust, under the direction of the Headteacher. This provides a wide range of services and works closely with many other organisations.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

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Overall effectiveness of the school

The inspectors agree with the school that this is a very good nursery which provides children with an excellent start to their education. The children make very good progress and the way the school provides for their personal development and well-being is excellent. They are happy and enjoy coming to school. The quality of provision is very good and effectively resourced. Teaching is very good and the contribution of the support staff is good. The school is very well led by the head and senior management, who share a clear vision of how to improve the school still further. The Family Centre has added considerably to the school's effectiveness and parents value the work and support provided by the school and Centre. The school gives very good value for money.

Grade: 1

Improvement since the last inspection

One key issue was identified in the last inspection report and this has been addressed. The school has significantly developed the services provided on site through the Family Centre to include: a playgroup; toddler groups; childminder drop-in; weekly Job Centre Plus sessions; crèches; adult training; computing; adult literacy classes; and before and after school provision for children attending the nursery and two local primary schools. As these services have grown, the nursery has maintained the standards and the quality of its teaching.

Grade: 1

Capacity to improve

The leadership and senior management of the school are dedicated to doing the best they can for the children, and have clear views on how to achieve this. They are not complacent and critically evaluate their work.

Grade: 1

What the school should do to improve further

Within this very positive picture the school should:

- establish ways of showing clearly and simply how much progress children make between starting in the nursery, and moving to primary school.

Achievement and standards

The school believes that its pupils are doing well; in the inspectors' view they sometimes do even better than this. At present the school does not make a clear assessment of children's attainment on entry, nor shortly before they leave. Whilst comprehensive written records are kept, these do not easily show how the children progress over their one or two years in the nursery.

The children make good progress across all areas of learning. Many children start before the age of three, they know and can do fewer things than most children of their age. This is particularly so in their language, and personal and social development. However, they make rapid progress and by the time they leave the school, the great majority of boys and girls can do what is expected for children of their age.

The nursery's commitment to children with special educational needs enables them to make very good progress. Those children who speak English as an additional language are identified quickly and benefit from effectively targeted help.

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being

The children's personal development is very good; they have settled quickly into school routines and have positive attitudes towards learning. Parents reported that any behaviour issues are quickly and effectively dealt with. Attendance is improving: the school has worked hard to encourage an understanding that 'every day counts'.

Good attention is paid to personal health and safety. The school provides very healthy cooked meals and meal times are very well used as social events. The children take responsibility for tidying equipment away and preparing their rooms for lunch. As it is working towards a healthy schools award, the school has included this theme in much of its work.

Relationships are very good and the children quickly learn to share and play together. They are keen to come to school. Staff have consistently high expectations of behaviour at all times. This includes the approach taken by the Family Centre playgroup, which is carefully overseen by the nursery staff. Good attitudes are also evident in the children's willingness to take responsibility for activities, and to work independently as well as under supervision.

Social, moral and cultural development is very good, and spiritual development is good. Links have been made with a nursery in Turin whose children have visited Monkchester. The Newcastle children celebrated Harlequin with drama and music as well as contributing to an exhibition in the City. Festivals such as Divali and the Chinese New Year are also celebrated.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

The school rates this as very good overall and inspectors fully agree.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is very good. Activities are purposeful and well organised, promoting children's confidence and capacity to learn. Teachers' planning ensures that the work is very well pitched and is suitably challenging. This enables the children to make very good progress. Careful attention is paid to ensuring that children are able to share and join in group sessions, listening and responding to each other. The contribution of the support staff is good. At times it is very good, as where they have clearly identified roles in observing and assessing children's contributions during 'show and tell' sessions. Adults know the children extremely well and relationships are very good. Every child's well-being and individual achievement are central to the nursery's approach.

Procedures to record what children can do are detailed and well established, and used well by teachers to plan new work on a day to day basis. However, there is no clear way of showing how much progress children make between starting in the nursery and moving to primary school.

Grade: 1

Curriculum and other activities

The children's work is very well planned and organised. It matches their needs effectively through stimulating activities, and the majority are able to achieve what is expected of children of that age when they leave. Parents spoke highly of the information provided about the work which all children do in the school.

Recognising the achievements of the children on entry, considerable attention is given to personal and social development during the first term at school, along with language development.

Last year a phonic based reading programme was introduced for the older children and it has already improved what the children can do. This year outdoor learning is being developed further to raise the already good quality of work outdoors.

The work in the Family Centre playgroup is carefully linked to that of the school, using well planned experiences. The other activities available through the Family Centre, including the before and after-school care, also share the school's approach, particularly in terms of personal and social development. Children from three schools benefit from the after-school care. A group of parents perform as 'Drumma Mummas' with their children, trained by a professional musician. These services promote parents' confidence and the education

courses improve their employment opportunities. The Family Centre is a major asset to the overall provision.

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support

The school is a very happy place providing excellent care, guidance and support. Arrangements for health and safety and for child protection are very good. Children and families needing support are quickly and discretely identified. Working with the Family Centre manager, appropriate support services are contacted and provision made. Many services are provided locally, for example by health visitors and speech therapists who visit the Centre. Parents spoke highly of this local provision.

Grade: 1

Leadership and management

The Headteacher provides very good leadership and management. She is committed to providing high quality early years education and innovative family support. The school has a highly-skilled team and staff have an excellent understanding of how young children develop and learn. The school's judgement that this is good reflects its awareness that there is potential to develop more in the future. However, in the inspectors' view the leadership and management are not just good, but are excellent. Apart from this underestimation of the senior team, the self-evaluation is accurate and the school knows its strengths and areas for development very well.

Several of the support staff in the nursery and the Family Centre have a range of roles, and they contribute effectively to the sense of purpose across the many facets of the organisation.

Resources are very well managed. This year, for the first time, co-ordinators have been allocated funds to support their areas of learning. This reflects the recent changes in funding as well as the nature of the governing body. The governors have started to work effectively and have established procedures which fully comply with legal requirements, although there are some minor issues which are still being addressed. They are committed and enthusiastic, and all have attended training for their new roles.

The development of the Family Centre, along with support from the local Sure Start programme, has established extremely effective links with other providers, trainers and organisations. The integration of care, education and extended services has significantly improved the experiences of parents and children. The school and Family Centre are fully inclusive and successfully promote a strong sense of community.

Grade: 1

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