

# Usworth Colliery Nursery School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108749
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	288176
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 April 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gianna Ulyatt

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>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	126
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Janette Nightingale
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs M H Brabban
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 April 2002
<b>School address</b>	Usworth Colliery Washington Tyne and Wear NE37 3BL
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 2193620
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 2193620

---

<b>Age group</b>	3-4
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 April 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	288176

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Usworth Colliery Nursery School is situated in the urban community of Washington and serves a socially mixed area. It is above average in size for a nursery school. The nursery provides morning or afternoon education for children aged three to four years. Most children are of white British heritage and the number from minority ethnic backgrounds is low. The percentage of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The nursery is part of a designated Children's Centre and offers an extended service in the form of full day and out of school care.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Usworth Nursery is a good school and provides good value for money. Parents are rightly pleased with the good levels of care and education their children receive. One parent, who speaks for many, says, 'I feel the nursery staff do all they can to help my child settle into the new environment and also allay any concerns that I have.' Dedicated leadership and good teaching are effective in helping children make good progress in all of the six nationally recommended areas of learning. The provision is good for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They are successfully integrated into every activity and make good progress. The school is proactive and successful in linking with other agencies for the benefit of all the children.

Children's personal development is good. Relationships are good and children enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and secure in this caring environment and are happy and active learners. Behaviour is good and children enjoy the company of their friends. Attendance rates are satisfactory and the school works hard with parents and children to improve them.

Standards on entry to the school are above those expected for three year olds. Progress for the majority is good. Attainment exceeds expectations for this age group as children leave the nursery and enter primary school. Progress in writing is satisfactory although more able children do not always achieve as they ought. Progress in children's personal development is good overall but they make satisfactory gains in the skills they need to work independently. Although teachers provide a good range of activities to motivate and interest children, they do not always provide enough opportunities to promote independent learning.

Teaching and learning are good. Adults interact well with children and ensure they are busy with purposeful learning activities. Children enjoy adult-led activities and develop good concentration skills. Adults have good relationships with children and are effective in encouraging children to share and work together. Procedures to assess children's progress are good, but information could be used more effectively when planning children's activities. As a result, work is not always challenging enough especially for more able children in literacy.

The curriculum is good and takes full account of all six areas of learning through a themed approach. This makes learning more meaningful for children. The nursery is working towards a more balanced programme so that children have more opportunities to choose how they would like to learn. The outdoor curriculum is developing well and has a strong impact on physical development and aspects of personal development. The school provides good levels of care for its children and the required safety and safeguarding procedures are in place.

Leadership, management and governance are good. The headteacher has led the school successfully through extensive changes since the last inspection. The issue concerning language development has been addressed effectively with children now having well planned opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. Self-evaluation is good and the management team is clear about the school's strengths and what else needs to be done. Consequently, the school has good capacity for improving further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for children to learn independently.
- Improve the use of assessment so work is better matched to children's needs especially for able children in writing.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good and children's attainment is above expectations for this age group. Most children make good progress from their starting point in all six areas of learning. The school's assessment shows that progress in mathematics, early reading, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development is particularly good. Progress in writing is satisfactory but is improving because of new strategies which place a stronger emphasis on this aspect of the curriculum. Nevertheless, more able children do not make enough progress because opportunities for learning and applying their knowledge of letter sounds and familiar words in their writing are not planned at a level that is sufficiently challenging. Progress in personal, social and emotional development is good and children show good levels of confidence and enthusiasm. However their progress in learning the skills to work independently is satisfactory and is not as good as in other aspects of personal, social and emotional development. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they are well supported so they can take a full and active part in all activities.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children enjoy school and they approach their activities with interest. They concentrate well when constructing models or bouncing and controlling a ball. Children are less confident making choices or working independently because these skills are not always encouraged. Behaviour is good. Children are well mannered and because they have a good positive attitude, they play amicably together. They particularly enjoy playing outside and are adventurous on the equipment without being fearful. Children feel safe and know who to turn to if they are upset or worried, should the need arise. They go on walks in the locality and learn how to conduct themselves to assure their safety. Children enjoy their lunch and know that fruit and vegetables are healthy foods. They like sampling different food, including exotic fruit. Children actively take part in daily vigorous activity outdoors. They know that running fast outside keeps you fit. The school has worked hard to improve attendance, through many initiatives focused around puppets and activities with the result that attendance is improving and is now satisfactory. Children know they have a responsibility to be kind and helpful. They willingly help tidy away their equipment and they invite the elderly in the community for tea. Their good early reading skills, confidence with numbers and their learning of basic computer skills prepares them well for the Reception class.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. A variety of activities ensure children enjoy learning. Staff encourage children to develop their imagination, especially in creative role play situations. In small groups, staff play fun games with children which successfully increase their skills across all areas of the curriculum especially in numeracy. Teachers extend learning by asking probing questions which make children think. For example, when cutting fruit, children are encouraged to consider and explain about the sharpness of knives and the texture of fruit. A new way of

organising the nursery has created a better balance between activities led by adults and those provided for free choice. The adult-led activities are planned with much thought and discussion. As a result, sessions run smoothly and staff know what they want children to learn. However, not all staff are clear how best to promote the skills children need to exercise greater independence in learning especially when they are exploring new situations. Although staff now have detailed assessment information, they do not always make enough use of this to check that work is sufficiently challenging. This is especially the case in planning writing activities for the more able children who do not have enough challenging opportunities to express their ideas in writing.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and takes good account of the six areas of learning. Each day children arrive to a good variety of indoor activities which are generally inspired by a specific theme. Careful planning is improving the balance between adult led and free choice activities. The focus is firmly on learning through first-hand, practical experiences. Children particularly enjoy learning outside where good emphasis is placed on physical development through adventurous equipment. Increasing use is being made of the outdoors to enrich learning in other areas of learning. Many visitors enhance learning. They convey important messages to children such as the importance of regular attendance. They encourage children to think about those less fortunate than themselves. Exciting visits promote caring for animals, good health and generally broaden children's horizons through travel to different places of local interest.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Safeguarding systems meet national guidelines and risk assessments are in place to ensure the health and safety of children. Children confirm they feel safe in the nursery. The very good relationship with parents is established through visits prior to children starting school. This helps them settle well into the new surroundings. Parents are pleased with the good levels of care and confirm: 'I know my child is always well cared for and given good support.' Parents are welcomed each day and can discuss concerns at any time. Good links with the primary school make the transition into the Reception class seamless.

The support and guidance provided for children's academic progress is good overall. Most adults explain to children what they are going to learn and praise them when they are successful. They monitor children's progress and provide extra help when needed although some children are not sufficiently challenged in writing. Children who have learning difficulties are quickly identified and given the support they need to ensure their progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, who is well supported by the governing body, has a clear vision for the school. Together, they have led it successfully through extensive changes since the last inspection. Improvements to the building have led to the indoor area being very spacious and the new outdoor space is having a positive impact on children's physical and personal development. The school's improvement plan is underpinned by a clear commitment

to meeting the needs of the children and contains a good range of relevant priorities with appropriate actions. Links with parents are strong and the nursery has a good reputation in the community. The school monitors its performance effectively and uses achievement data well to evaluate the nursery's effectiveness and to identify areas for improvement. Consequently, the school has a clear view of the way ahead and this, combined with a strong team and good improvement made since the last inspection, indicates good capacity to improve. The governing body contributes both well and systematically to leadership and management. Governors manage the budget well and keep a close eye on spending. Resources are managed efficiently and the school offers good value for money.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
---	-----------------------

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

26 April 2007

Inspection of Usworth Colliery Nursery School, Washington, NE37 3BL

Dear Children

I had a lovely day in your nursery. It was great to see you dressed up like 'Spike'. You have so many lovely toys to play with. Your garden and playground outside is stunning. I love the tunnel and the areas where insects hide.

You have a good school. I think you are learning lots of interesting things, for example how much fruit to eat each day and why it is important to run fast outside. You look very fit and already have strong muscles. Teachers make sure you try hard when working with grown-ups. They are also going to give some of you harder jobs to do so you become even cleverer and write your own ideas. They are also going to help you learn how to play at activities, sometimes with a grown-up but also on your own or with a few friends.

All adults care about you and make sure you feel safe and happy in school. They enjoy watching you learning and are going to watch you even more to make sure the activities are interesting for you and make you think hard.

It was good to meet such friendly, happy and well mannered children. I know you already have made lots of new friends, so do try to keep them even when you move to your next school.

With very best wishes,

Gianna Ulyatt

(Lead inspector)