

Sir James Knott Memorial Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108563
Local Authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	309722
Inspection date	4 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Linda Buller

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 on roll	116
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Derek Ovington
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Hucker
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2005
School address	Percy Square River View Tynemouth North Shields Tyne and Wear NE30 4EG
Telephone number	0191 2005438
Fax number	0191 2966897

Age group	3–4
Inspection date	4 July 2008
Inspection number	309722

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: 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 an Additional Inspector who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the impact on children's achievement and enjoyment of the 'free flow' curriculum provision
- the effectiveness of self-evaluation procedures in bringing about school improvement
- the impact of the links with the Children's Centre on the provision of care and support for children's learning and well-being.

Evidence was gathered from the school's records of children's progress and the assessments of the standards they attain, from observing teaching and learning, from analysis of children's records of achievement and from discussions with children, staff and governors. Parents' responses to the Ofsted questionnaire were also analysed. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own judgements, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The Nursery draws children from an area which is mixed in terms of socio-economic circumstances. Children attend either a morning or afternoon session, with an option of extended childcare on site. The school was designated as a North Tyneside Children's Centre in September 2006 with an Outreach worker to facilitate these developments. The school was awarded full Extended School status by the local authority in October 2007 and Investors in People status in February 2008. A significant majority of children enter the Nursery from other childcare settings, although for a small percentage this is their first experience of care other than at home.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Sir James Knott Nursery School provides an outstanding start to children's education. An outstanding, broad and exceptionally well enriched curriculum, delivered through outstanding teaching, contributes significantly both to the children's obvious enjoyment of school and to their excellent achievement. The free flow of movement between the activities provided both inside and out means that children are constantly inspired to learn.

Children's skills on entry to Nursery are above those typical of their age. They make outstanding progress in all areas of learning. Achievement is high, with the majority of children working within the goals expected of children at the end of their Reception year by the time they leave the Nursery, although achievement in early reading, writing and calculation skills is a little lower. Parents rightly have a very high regard for the work of the school typically commenting, 'The whole ethos of the Nursery sets children and parents up to succeed, learn and feel happy. Methods of teaching are innovative and fun and allow all children and parents to participate and gain something'.

Staff make learning a constant source of pleasure, excitement and adventure. The three weekly cycle of planning ensures that, through excellent adult interaction, children make rapid gains in their knowledge and initiate their own ideas of how, in the following week, they will take these ideas forward. The third 'creative week' provides all the opportunities needed for children to put their new knowledge into practice and make excellent progress in their skills development. This is particularly effective in the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative and physical development. For example, children develop early scientific and observational skills when tracking the development of caterpillars into butterflies. Their observational skills are again put to use in still life drawing where they are able to use their skills in well developed pencil control to draw a range of different fresh fish. This in turn links seamlessly into children's excellent cultural development of how important fishing is to the local area.

The school grounds are very attractively and imaginatively laid out. They provide enormous scope for children to enjoy a wide range of physical, creative and social outdoor experiences. Consequently, children have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and follow healthy lifestyles. They demonstrate, for example, their well developed understanding of the dangers which can come from exposure to the sun; they make sure they have protection by wearing hats when working outside, and by using the veranda areas.

Underpinning the school's success is the strong focus on providing high quality care, guidance and support. This has been further enhanced with the addition to the school of a Children's Centre. Links to other services such as health care professionals have been extended and ensure that families and children are helped to overcome any difficulties they may encounter. Activities such as family learning days are well attended. Through these sessions, parents gain a strong awareness of how best to play a part in their children's learning. Staff are highly skilled in nurturing each child. This ensures that they grow in confidence and independence, developing outstanding personal, social and emotional skills that equip them exceptionally well for the future. Children attend regularly and behave extremely well. The wealth of activities which involve children in exploring local, national and international traditions and events gives them a strong understanding for their age of how other people live their lives and the part they play in their school and local community.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The school is extremely well led by the headteacher with high expectations of what can be achieved. The staff share these high expectations and are supported by well informed governors who regularly and effectively monitor the work of the school. All required safeguarding procedures are in place to minimise risks and to ensure that children are safe. Self-evaluation procedures accurately identify how well the school is doing. Staff regularly observe children to assess and track their progress, and have a very good understanding of each child's needs. However, this information is not always measured or recorded against each strand of learning. This limits the ability of leaders and managers to closely analyse the information in order to fine-tune future priorities. Nevertheless, the staff's skills and experience have ensured that the school has continued to improve since the last inspection and demonstrates that the school has excellent capacity to keep on developing.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

As a nursery school, the Foundation Stage is completely covered by the Overall Effectiveness section.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend and improve the recording of children's progress against each strand of their learning in order to fine-tune future priorities for improvement.

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.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

8 July 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Sir James Knott Memorial Nursery School, North Tyneside, NE30 4AG

I can see why you love coming to school. There are so many fun things for you to do. Your school is outstanding which means it is an extra special place where you learn a lot. I had a lovely day with you. I enjoyed watching you work and was very impressed by how well you behave and join in with each other. I especially enjoyed watching your activities in the super outside areas that the school has made for you. It was good to see that you all know how important it is to wear your hats when out in the sun.

Thank you for talking to me and showing me your work. Your teachers are really good at helping you learn and they give you lots of interesting things to do. All the grown ups in school know each of you very well and are careful to give you the help you need to learn lots of new things. This means that you can already do many of the things which you are not expected to do until you are much older. Well done!

The staff are going to keep a record of all the things you have learnt. By doing this, they can carefully decide what else the school can provide for all the boys and girls who come to the Nursery in the future.

Best wishes to you all in your move to big school.

Yours sincerely

Linda Buller

Lead inspector