

Langley Moor Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113977
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	311436
Inspection dates	5–6 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Sue Sharkey

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	
School	78
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Julia Millard
Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Ivory
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2003
School address	Brandon Lane Langley Moor Durham County Durham DH7 8LL
Telephone number	0191 3780830
Fax number	0

Age group	3–4
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Langley Moor Nursery School serves many villages on the outskirts of Durham. Children attend part time and come from a wide mix of social and economic backgrounds. The majority of children are from White British backgrounds and a few are learning to speak English as an additional language. A small number of children have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Langley Moor Nursery provides good quality education and gives good value for money. It has several outstanding features, including the quality of care. Staff know children and their families extremely well and use their knowledge to create a very supportive atmosphere in which children feel secure and grow in confidence. This contributes well to the children's outstanding personal development and good progress in their work. Parents are delighted by the quality of the education, a typical comment being, 'We consider our child very lucky to be attending the Nursery; we are very happy with every aspect of its running'. It is easy to see why children enjoy attending. Parents attend courses in the school to develop their knowledge and understanding of learning for their children. The school works well with many local agencies, such as health services, so that children are well supported in all areas.

Children achieve well because the staff challenge children successfully through good teaching. Excellent relationships help to underpin this success. Children make good gains in their knowledge and skills, especially in language. When children start Nursery, their attainment is broadly in line with what is typical for children of this age, but this does vary from year to year. By the time they leave, their standards are better than those expected of four-year-olds. The excellent range of activities, which are provided for children to explore, allows them to develop their skills well. Children clearly enjoy being in the Nursery and are keen to learn. Regular guidance and practical experiences linked to understanding how to keep healthy and safe successfully encourage children to be independent and confident. Those children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or where English is not their first language, are supported well by the headteacher, staff and other agencies, and achieve well.

Outstanding personal development is clearly seen in children's positive attitude to learning. They are sociable, friendly and behave very well. Excellent relationships between staff and children ensure that the atmosphere is calm and purposeful, and that children learn to respect everyone. There is a good balance between times when children can choose what they do and when they sit together with an adult to learn as a group. Children make the most of learning actively in the outdoor activities. Carefully chosen resources promote excitement and independent learning which clearly excite the children. The provision of outdoor clothing means that they can enjoy the outdoors no matter what the weather is like.

Leadership and management, including governance, are good. The headteacher is well supported by her recently appointed assistant headteacher and together they provide a strong lead for raising standards. Systems for tracking children's progress are used well but these are not yet fully effective in tackling potential provision for all children. Clear leadership means that staff feel part of a strong team where their ideas are valued. The school has a clear view of its own effectiveness and has good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

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

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure greater rigour in the monitoring of children's progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are better than expected for children of this age. When they start school, many have skills that are broadly in line with those typical for their age, although their pre-school experience varies considerably. The good range of activities, individual attention and good teaching enable children to make good progress particularly in mathematics, speech and language. This positive beginning makes an important contribution to their future education. A carefully planned curriculum and exciting outdoor activities are important factors in developing children's good achievement. Almost all children, including those at the early stages of learning to speak English, have the knowledge, skills and understanding typical for their age by the time they leave the Nursery. Many exceed these expectations especially in literacy and personal, social and emotional development. Those with learning difficulties make good progress because the care and support they receive is very effective.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. They very quickly adjust to the routines, and take a delight in the wide range of activities provided each day, both in the classroom and outdoors. Attendance is good. It is obvious that children enjoy attending Nursery, meeting their friends and finding out new things. One parent wrote, 'My child has loved going to Nursery since her first day'. Development of the outdoors has given children exciting opportunities to extend their learning in an environment where they are able to play together as well as learn. They thoroughly enjoy the outdoor challenges and take plenty of energetic exercise. They manage their own learning and cooperate with others; their behaviour is excellent. As a result, they are well prepared for the next phase of their education.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children enjoy learning about other cultures; for instance, they learn in detail about Diwali. Relationships with adults and other children are excellent. They have a very good understanding of what is right and wrong for their age, and what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. The children make a very good contribution to the community; for example, they enjoy harvest time when they visit elderly people and take food parcels. The school is usually successful when it enters the 'Beautiful Durham' painting competition and children regularly win prizes for their art work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school's good teaching and learning are characterised by a constant focus on providing exciting activities, which successfully motivate and enthuse the children. Activities are carefully planned and all staff are engaged in extending the classroom to include the outdoors. This area has been well planned and equipped to ensure that learning is fun and part of children's everyday activities. However, staff do not always plan outdoor tasks that are challenging enough for all children. Relationships between children and adults boost children's confidence and promote self-esteem. Attention is given to checking each child's progress through assessment but this is not yet rigorous enough to support future provision for individual children. Opportunities for children to speak and listen are regularly planned into activities; children are encouraged

to listen courteously to each other. The intervention of staff in children's imaginative play is particularly successful and stimulates enjoyment. Children playing in the Christmas stable were encouraged to develop language as they enjoyed their roles as angels. Support staff work well with the children and help those with learning difficulties make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum is both broad and exciting. Staff work successfully as a team and their many diverse skills help to enrich the curriculum and stimulate children. Visitors help children to learn about animals, keeping safe and keeping their bodies healthy. Excellent links with outside agencies and local schools contribute much to children's learning. The many and varied practical activities help to build confidence as children learn to communicate with each other. Both indoors and outdoor areas are well organised to encompass all areas of learning. Children thoroughly enjoy and make excellent use of information technology. This is evident in their confidence when using computers independently. They delight in using the digital camera and interactive whiteboard.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Personal care makes a major contribution to the safety and independence of children. Procedures for safeguarding and risk assessments are in place. Parents are pleased with the excellent support given to them and their children, and many comment on the open and friendly atmosphere, which contributes to their children's happiness. Careful observations are made of children's successes and problems so that activities are planned to excite and interest them. The tracking of children's progress is good but the resultant data are not always used consistently enough to help children make even better progress. Staff work closely with the local primary school and careful thought is given to children's transfer so that they quickly settle and adapt to different surroundings. There is extensive support for children with learning difficulties and strong links with outside agencies ensure that the quality of provision is excellent. Ever mindful of the needs of its families, the school offers care for a small number of children before normal hours.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management ensure that there is a clear sense of purpose and that the professional development of staff is well planned. Staff work well together and are united in their desire to do their very best for the children. The positive attitudes and dedication of everyone involved are reflected in the welcoming atmosphere in the school. The headteacher leads by example and is continually seeking ways to improve the provision for children. A recent change is the outdoor area where children can engage in learning in a similar way as they can indoors. This initiative is growing and still needs to be expanded so that staff more easily identify ways in which all children are challenged. Governors are very supportive of the school but are not yet extending their involvement enough in helping with the raising of standards through the tracking of children's progress. Self-evaluation is secure and accurate and the school knows clearly where it needs to go. Progress since the last inspection has been good.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

8 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Langley Moor Nursery School, Durham, DH7 8LL

I enjoyed my visit to your school very much. Thank you for talking to me and telling me about the exciting things you do. I could see how much you enjoy being inside school as well as outside. I was very impressed with how well some of you could park your cars! Your mums, dads and carers think that your school is a good place to be and I agree with them.

It was lovely to see you being so friendly to each other and to the adults who teach and work with you. You were so well behaved all the time that sometimes I didn't hear you and wondered if you were creeping around!! It was lovely to see you enjoying school and I could tell that you were learning through all the different activities that the grown-ups organise for you. They are good at teaching and keep checking on how well you do things. I have asked your school to do this differently so that you all have even more help to become better at reading, writing and numbers.

Thank you for helping me to get ready for Christmas. You taught me some new songs and I was able to see how much you were learning to work and play with each other in your Christmas stable.

Thank you for helping me find out about your school and for being such good children.

Best wishes

Sue Sharkey

Lead inspector