

Boldon Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108665
Local Authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	324812
Inspection dates	11–12 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Janet Bennett

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	78
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	38
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Michelle Hunter
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Stokoe
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2006
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Reginald Street Boldon Colliery Tyne and Wear NE35 9DG
Telephone number	0191 5363669
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Age group	3–4
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

Boldon Nursery School is part of a Children's Centre which offers a range of services for children from birth to four and their families. The school is registered to provide sessional and full day care for 12 babies and 52 children between the ages of two and four and also provides nursery education for three and four-year-olds. Childcare provision and nursery education were inspected together, with the findings combined in this report

The school is situated within Boldon Newtown, an area where housing regeneration is currently taking place. Children are from mixed social backgrounds. A significant proportion of children come from areas of high social deprivation. Very few children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and no children are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average but varies from year-to-year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is an effective and highly inclusive school where strong partnerships between staff, children and families are at the heart of its success. Parents appreciate the support they receive and hold the work of staff in very high regard.

Children make good progress and achieve well, irrespective of their backgrounds or specific learning needs and/or disabilities. The care provision for babies and children under three contributes well to their learning and development. By the time children reach the age of three, they have a broad range of skills but overall their skills are below those typical for their age. The good range of opportunities for learning indoors and out for three and four-year-olds ensures that children continue to make good progress and by the time they leave the Nursery children achieve the levels of development that are typical for children of this age.

The progress children make in their social and emotional development is outstanding because staff know children very well and they provide positive role models. This ensures that children learn to play well together and become confident, independent and motivated learners. Progress in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is satisfactory because opportunities for children to apply their counting skills in play are not yet fully developed.

Children behave very well. They are friendly towards visitors and show care and concern for one another. They are keen to take on responsibility for looking after equipment and tidying up at the end of sessions and respond positively to opportunities to help others when it is their turn to be 'special helper' for the day. Sensitive support from staff ensures that children understand how to use equipment and climbing apparatus safely and how to share and take turns. Children understand the importance of washing their hands carefully after messy activities and before they eat, and they enjoy the healthy meals and snacks provided. The opportunities for play in the extensive outdoor areas contribute very well to children's enthusiasm for learning and their enjoyment of the Nursery.

Staff observe children carefully and use their knowledge of children's interests to extend play. This contributes well to the good progress that children make. However, on some occasions, activities planned by adults do not involve children sufficiently to maintain their interest and, as a result, the pace of learning slows. This is because assessment information is not used consistently to identify next steps in learning so that activities are well matched to the needs of all children. Parents/carers appreciate the good systems for sharing information which enables them to contribute to their child's learning at home and for staff to build upon the interests of children in the Nursery.

The welfare of children is promoted exceptionally well. The needs of individual children are at the heart of the provision and all staff are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and other agencies to ensure that every child is effectively supported so that they achieve as well as they possibly can.

The headteacher provides effective leadership and is central to driving continuous improvement. She is well supported by a team of staff who are committed to meeting the needs of the children and families they serve. Leaders know the school's strengths and have identified appropriate priorities for further improvement. Effective systems for monitoring children's progress are in place but there is inconsistency in the way teachers are using the information available to them in order to plan activities which systematically build on prior learning. Governors are increasingly involved in the work of the school and they contribute well to its development. Good progress

has been made since the time of the last inspection and the school has a good capacity to build further on its successes.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy by improving opportunities for children to apply their skills through play.
- Extend monitoring by leaders to ensure that assessment information is used by teachers to plan activities which consistently build well on prior learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

All children, irrespective of their backgrounds, make good progress and achieve well.

The care provision for babies and children under three promotes good progress in learning and development and this contributes well to children's overall achievement. When children start at Nursery at the age of three, their skills are varied but overall levels of development are below those typical for their age. The provision made in the Nursery continues to build well on prior learning and by the time children leave their skills are in line with those typical for children of this age. Progress in social and emotional development is outstanding because relationships are strong and adults provide very positive role models for children. Children make satisfactory progress in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy because opportunities for children to apply their skills in play are not yet fully developed.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because their needs are accurately identified and staff work very effectively with other agencies to ensure that individuals receive the support they need.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development and well-being are good. The warm relationships which exist between staff and children are greatly appreciated by parents and contribute very well to children's confidence and well-being. Children show care and concern for one another and enthusiastically explore the world around them. Their moral and social development is outstanding. Sensitive support from caring adults ensures that children understand how to share and take turns, how to resolve conflict and to respect the needs and feelings of others. Spiritual and cultural development is good. Children marvel at the wonders of the natural world around them. For example, in the provision for three to four-year-olds, children eagerly counted down the days until their chicks would hatch, looking closely for changes in the eggs each day. Children learn about cultures that are different from their own through celebrations and the resources they use. For example, in the care provision the youngest children enjoy exploring fabrics and musical instruments from other countries as part of their play and older children maintain regular contact with a child who has returned to her home country of Poland.

Children use equipment safely; they follow appropriate hygiene routines; enjoy the healthy meals and snacks provided and take full advantage of the many opportunities for physical activity outdoors. During the inspection, babies thoroughly enjoyed playing on the parachute in the garden and older children challenged themselves to climb and balance on the outdoor equipment. Children behave well. They are friendly towards visitors and each other and they make a positive contribution to the Nursery by caring for equipment, tidying resources away

at the end of sessions and supporting others who need help when it is their turn to be 'special helper' for the day.

Attendance is satisfactory. Disruption through local housing regeneration and necessary absence because of childhood illnesses impact on the attendance of some children; however, the headteacher has effective systems in place to promote the regular attendance of most children.

Quality of provision

Effectiveness in promoting children's learning and development

Grade: 2

The quality of provision is good. It effectively promotes children's learning and development through an exciting range of opportunities for play both indoors and out.

Staff use their observations of children to plan opportunities for play which interest children. Together with the sensitive support and enthusiasm of staff, this ensures that children engage for extended periods in the activities they choose for themselves. Activities planned by adults ensure that children are taught new skills which they can apply independently. For example, children who had previously been taught how to mix powder-paint were able to use these skills independently in the creative area. However, on some occasions activities led by adults do not fully engage children and the pace of learning slows. This is because assessment information is not used consistently to identify the next steps in learning so that activities are well matched to the needs of all children.

The opportunities for play indoors and out and the well established daily routines contribute very well to children's personal and social development. From a very young age, children are encouraged to be independent. For example, in the care provision for babies, mealtimes are used to develop coordination through the appropriate use of cutlery, and older children are encouraged to serve themselves, taking part in the social occasion of sharing a mealtime with friends. Children's safety is promoted through the encouragement of staff to adopt appropriate hygiene routines and through direct teaching of skills such as crossing the road. Although there are regular opportunities for children to apply their counting skills throughout the day, opportunities for children to use these skills to solve number problems in their play are not yet fully developed. Parents appreciate the many opportunities they have for sharing information with staff and say that this enables them to make an active contribution to their children's learning.

Effectiveness in promoting children's welfare

Grade: 1

Children's welfare is promoted exceptionally well. The needs of children are at the heart of provision and all staff are committed to working in partnership to ensure that every child achieves as well as they can. Trusting relationships exist between staff, parents and carers, enhanced by the identification of key workers for every child. Excellent partnerships with other agencies ensure that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are vulnerable receive the support that they need.

Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust and risk assessments are rigorously implemented. The building is very secure and systems for adults to enter the building when picking up or dropping off children are well managed. Staff understand the statutory requirements for securing children's welfare and ensure that these are consistently met.

Parents appreciate the flexible arrangements that are made when children start nursery or transfer between care and education provision. This contributes very well to the trusting relationships that exist between home and school and ensures that children settle very quickly and make good progress in their learning and development. Children's positive attitudes to learning and the social skills they develop ensure that they are well prepared for their next stage of learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides effective leadership for this highly inclusive school. She is a good role model for staff and is central to driving continuous improvement. She is well supported by a team of staff who are committed to meeting the needs of the children and families they serve. The school regularly seeks the views of parents and carers within the community and staff work very effectively with other agencies to ensure that services develop and evolve in response to local needs. This ensures that the school makes a good contribution to community cohesion.

Systems for tracking the progress of children are effectively implemented and used well to set challenging targets for children's learning and development. Monitoring systems have been used to identify appropriate priorities for improvement. These systems are not yet rigorously implemented to ensure that staff use assessment information to plan activities which consistently build well on children's prior learning. Governors are increasingly involved in the work of the school and they contribute well to its development.

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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 is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
The standards[1] reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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

How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**

13 May 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Boldon Nursery School, South Tyneside, NE35 9DG

Thank you so much for talking with me when I came to visit your school. I really enjoyed watching you playing outside in your lovely garden. I could see how much you were enjoying yourselves. I saw the babies having fun exploring the parachute and older children challenging themselves to balance on the climbing apparatus. I thought the willow den and tunnel looked like exciting places to play and I was wondering if your chicks had hatched yet as I know that you were eagerly anticipating their arrival!

Your school is a good school because the adults make sure that you have lots of opportunities to play and this helps you to learn new things each day. I could also see that you are cared for very well and this makes you happy to come to nursery and confident to try things out for yourselves. I was very impressed to see the babies using cutlery to feed themselves and how well the older children tidy away and help each other. I thought that you all behaved well and tried very hard to play well with your friends. The adults make sure that you stay safe and you help by playing sensibly and carefully washing your hands after messy activities and before a snack.

I enjoyed looking at your learning journals and seeing all of the exciting things that you have been doing. Your parents and the people who care for you at home told me that they like these as well because they help them to talk with you about the things that you have done in the nursery each day.

I think that the adults in the nursery are good at teaching you new things and I enjoyed joining you in group-time and listening as you talked to others about the exciting things you had been doing. Sometimes, the activities that adults plan are not interesting enough so some children do not take part and this means they do not learn as much as they could. I have asked the adults who care for you in nursery to make sure that activities always involve you well and help everyone to learn and develop as well as they possibly can, and I have asked your headteacher to check to make sure that this happens.

Most importantly I hope that you continue to enjoy school, to look after yourselves and each other and I wish you all great things for the future.

Yours faithfully

Janet Bennett

Lead inspector