

Cruddas Park Early Years Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108428
Local authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	377751
Inspection dates	21–22 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Moira Fitzpatrick

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	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Bryson
Headteacher	Katrina Fenwick/Helen Cavanagh
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons involving four practitioners and four teachers, and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation relating to welfare and safeguarding arrangements, the school development plan, teachers' assessments of children's progress and the planning for learning. The responses from 33 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were considered, as well as responses from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well the nursery meets the diverse needs of all groups of children.
- The effectiveness of the school's links with parents and carers.
- How well senior leaders and members of the governing body have managed unavoidable changes to provision since the previous inspection.

Information about the school

The nursery is larger than average. It draws children from a wide geographical area and its community contains a rich cultural and ethnic mix. About half of the nursery population is from White British heritage and the remainder of children are from a wide range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds from Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe. The proportion of children who speak English as an additional language, including those who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language, is high. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, so too is the proportion of children who are known to be eligible for free school meals.

There is before- and after-school care for children on the nursery roll and additional day care on Thursdays and Fridays when the nursery is not in session. A playgroup operates on three mornings each week; this provision did not form part of this inspection.

The nursery has undergone significant change since the previous inspection, owing to substantial reductions in its budget. Staffing has been significantly reduced and provision has reduced from five full days to 15 hours per week. Following consultation with parents and carers the nursery now operates three sessions of five hours from Monday to Wednesday. Two part-time headteachers share the senior leadership of the nursery. Each joint headteacher works three days covering Monday to Friday, with both on site on Wednesdays. The school holds a number of awards. These include the Basic Skills Quality Mark Award, the Investing in Children Award, the Gold Enviro-schools Award, and the Bronze Eco-school Award. It has Healthy School status and holds the Drug Education Quality Mark and the No Smoking Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good nursery. Some aspects of its work are outstanding. Parents and carers hold very positive views about the nursery because it provides, 'a wonderful nurturing environment'. Outstanding care, guidance and support for each child are at the heart of the school's work. This gives children a strong sense of security and well-being when they are at nursery and helps them become successful learners. The nursery is a harmonious and inclusive community. Through excellent partnerships with parents and carers and with external providers, the nursery uses the rich diversity of language, culture and traditions of the children to develop pride in their own culture and a good understanding and acceptance of others. The school's work on community cohesion is excellent. It celebrates difference and diversity, provides opportunities for parents and carers to meet in the school, through, for example, the Baby Social, and draws them into this work through its annual International Week activities.

All children achieve well during their time in the nursery, including children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. By the time they transfer to Reception children are well prepared for the move because the vast majority have reached the expected level for their age and some have exceeded it. Children's behaviour is good and helps to create a happy, purposeful atmosphere for learning and exploring. Children take great pride in looking after their nursery at 'tidy-up time'. They show a good understanding of healthy eating and are always active during their time at nursery.

Good, and sometimes outstanding teaching, ensures that children are presented with interesting activities to help them learn. Excellent relationships with children give them confidence to explore, follow their interests and find out for themselves. Staff make regular observations of children's learning and have collected detailed information on each child's learning this term. Although the provision for learning is good, planning for this is not as sharp or as regular as it might be, nor does planning make the best use of the information gathered. For example, learning intentions for activities are not clear and the vast amount of good quality information gathered by staff about children's learning is not always apparent in the plans for new learning.

The excellent management of budget cuts and staffing reductions by both headteachers has successfully steered the nursery through some significant challenges since the previous inspection. Reductions in staffing have been extremely

well managed so that morale is high and all staff are involved in improving the nursery and monitoring its work. The governing body gives excellent support and challenge to the school and together with school leaders ensure that self-evaluation is rigorous. It has taken successful action to maintain the nursery's quality of provision and to meet the needs of families, while developing its strengths as a training centre for other schools. The school has a good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of planning for children's learning immediately by:
 - updating planning very regularly and adapting provision to match children's developing needs
 - making full use of the expertise and knowledge of staff by involving them fully in preparing written plans and evaluating the impact of these
 - ensuring that all planning identifies learning intentions and expected learning outcomes for children.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children are happy learners, who smile as they enter the nursery and look about eagerly to see what is on offer. They separate calmly from their parents and carers, because they have excellent relationships with their key workers and feel safe and secure with them. Children show good levels of independence, including the youngest children who started at the beginning of the term. They have the confidence to explore and investigate the many activities that are set out for them and quickly settle to learn by themselves. The majority become absorbed in their activities and sometimes share toys and work together well. A good example of this cooperation was seen when a group of boys were building a railway track. They talked about how they would mend the track, and reminded each other they needed to wear a hat, 'in case something fell'. Children's good behaviour and the way they care for each other creates a warm, positive atmosphere for learning. They understand about taking turns, wait patiently for theirs and are learning to say please and thank you to each other. They have been taught to put away toys at 'tidy-up time' and follow the good example and encouragement of adults. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They enjoy learning, have a good understanding of right and wrong and have good social skills. The many opportunities to learn about each others' cultures and traditions develop their understanding of difference between people very well. Attendance is good because children enjoy coming to nursery and their parents and carers value what the nursery provides. By the time they leave, children are well equipped for the next stage of learning.

Children join the nursery with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. The learning and progress of all children is good, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, because staff are skilled in identifying barriers to learning and children's personal needs, then adapting provision to overcome these, and using external links to provide good language support. Gains in social and emotional

development are especially noteworthy in all children as a result of the outstanding care that staff provide for them.

These are the grades for the children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	2
Pupils' attainment	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Good teaching is based on a thorough understanding of how young children learn. Teachers know when to offer help and when to step back and allow children to learn independently. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to develop children's language by, for example, discussing an activity with them and ensuring that they are learning new vocabulary. All staff have excellent behaviour management skills. They use the same strategies and language when teaching children how their behaviour is affecting others and are always gentle and reassuring. This consistent approach helps children follow the rules and respond promptly when asked. Regular observations of children's learning give staff a clear idea of their developing interests which are then incorporated into future activities. Much good quality information is gathered, but the opportunity to identify and record the next steps for the child's learning is missed. Planning is not sufficiently well developed to promptly respond to children's changing learning needs. It does not ensure that activities always provide the correct level of challenge or support to fully stretch children's capabilities. Children with additional needs, for example, in speech and language or in developing good social skills, are given outstanding support in small group activities, where they make excellent gains in their learning.

The good curriculum is responsive to children's interests and is regularly adapted to meet these. For example, some boys have recently shown an interest in super heroes and have enjoyed role play and storytelling about their adventures. The curriculum is enriched by visits out of school, for example, to a local farm and the Discovery Museum. These experiences broaden children's knowledge of the wider world and create good opportunities for them to discover new interests. Access to outdoor learning is well managed to overcome the constraints of the building and give children space to run, climb and explore in a natural environment. Sometimes the range of choice is restricted outdoors and some children become passive because

there is nothing that tempts their interest. Staff make good use of a small roof garden for the children to grow vegetables and herbs that they then use for cooking.

Staff know the children and their families very well. They provide a warm, reassuring welcome at the start of each day, and give time to listen to any queries or concerns that parents and carers might have. They are alert to children's needs and spot any changes in their mood or enjoyment of learning quickly. They take prompt action, for example, by contacting parents immediately when a child is unwell. Children's Learning Journeys provide a good link between home and school and parents and carers are delighted with these records of their children's learning. Support for children whose circumstances might make them vulnerable is outstanding, as it is for their families. Links with external services for such families are exemplary in the way they ensure that support continues when the child moves on.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account:	2
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management are good. The joint headteachers have used their individual skills very effectively since the previous inspection to stabilise the school and involve staff in its development. Teamwork is good and staff regularly share their knowledge of what is going well and what could be improved. A good example of this was a recent change to the organisation of indoor provision. When staff noticed that some children were not settling well to activities in the large open plan room, they decided to create two rooms and reorganise resources. This has already had a marked affect on these and other children, and is beginning to improve their learning. However, some monitoring activities are not carried out with enough rigour, so that weaknesses are not spotted quickly, for example, in teachers' planning for learning. Attention to safeguarding is good. All staff on site have regular updates in child protection and welfare training and are well equipped to spot and deal with concerns.

The governing body plays a very effective part in shaping the direction of the school. Members of the governing body bring a wide range of expertise to the service of the school and have been robust in the challenge they offer. For example, they are vigilant in ensuring that safeguarding procedures fully meet requirements and make good provision for the safety and well-being of children and staff. Good promotion of equal opportunities ensures that children's needs are met well and discrimination is not tolerated. Excellent links with parents and carers keep them extremely well informed about their children's learning and allow the school to take note of their views and act upon them. The school and its community are highly cohesive through strong links with the local Sure Start centre and other schools and services. The school has a sharp understanding of and is highly responsive to the community's

needs. It very successfully develops children's understanding of differences between people and makes exceptionally good use of its diverse nursery community to do this.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

A higher proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires than is usually seen. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the nursery and the way that it cares for their children, keeps them safe and takes their views into account. Many spoke with enthusiasm about the additional arrangements the school makes for their children through the before- and after-school provision and the 'Busy Bodies, Enquiring Minds' provision that runs on Thursday and Friday. One questionnaire returned indicated a concern about the school helping children to have a healthy lifestyle and another about how effectively behaviour is managed. The inspection fully supports parents' and carers' positive views and these are reflected in the inspection findings contained in the report. It also found that children are encouraged to take regular exercise and to eat healthy fruit snacks and lunches while at nursery. Any inappropriate behaviour seen during inspection was promptly and effectively managed by staff.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cruddas Park Early Years Centre to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 33 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 62 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	82	6	18	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	70	10	30	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	19	58	14	42	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	70	10	30	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	76	8	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	61	13	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	61	12	36	1	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	16	48	16	48	0	0	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	70	10	30	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	61	12	36	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	67	11	33	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	27	82	6	18	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	79	7	21	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



23 November 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Cruddas Park Early Years Centre, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE4 7NL

Thank you for being kind and sharing with me when I inspected your nursery recently. I had a lovely time watching you find out so many things for yourselves, being kind and taking turns. Your good behaviour and the way you tidy up at the end of play makes your nursery a very happy and comfortable place to be. Your nursery is good because it helps you to learn so many things and gives you some lovely trips to exciting places. Your families must feel very proud of you when they see your lovely work in your Learning Journey books.

I could see that your teachers take excellent care of you, which makes you feel safe and happy in nursery. You are well taught and given plenty of interesting things from which to learn. I enjoyed watching some of you start building a house and do some really hard digging to move the soil. You worked very well together, as the children in the secret garden did when they made beautiful flower bowls. You all certainly like playing and learning outside, and are managing to get in and out of your waterproof suits very well, so you can go out whatever the weather!

Your headteachers, teachers and the governors are always looking for ways to make your nursery even better, which is why it is good. I have suggested that more careful planning for your activities, so they match what you need to learn next, would help with this. You can help by working as hard as you now do and by being kind and caring so that everyone feels happy and glad to be at nursery.

My best wishes to all at Cruddas Park Early Years Centre for a happy and successful year.

Yours sincerely

Moira Fitzpatrick
Lead inspector

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