

Bedewell Early Excellence Childrens Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132799
Local Authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	360439
Inspection dates	14–15 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Graeme Clarke

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	75
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Serena Johnson
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Hedley
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed activities in the school and day care centre including the work of three teachers during short visits to parts of lessons and extended visits to six lessons. Inspectors held discussions with members of the governing body, staff and parents and carers. They scrutinised the school's documentation including information about child protection and safeguarding, the curriculum, development plans and records of children's progress. They looked at the school's photographic record of children at work throughout the year. They analysed 30 questionnaires from parents and carers and 13 from members of staff.

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

- Records of children's attainment and progress over the past three years.
- The effectiveness of provision for children from minority ethnic groups and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- How effectively the school reviews its work and uses information to sustain its outstanding effectiveness indicated at the last inspection.

Information about the school

The school is of average size for children aged three to five years. An above average proportion of children have special educational needs and/or disabilities though fewer than average have a statement of special educational needs. Almost all children are of White British heritage and a small number of children with Turkish and Asian origins speak English as an additional language. The school has a strongly established reputation in the local authority and shares its expertise and philosophy for educating children in the Early Years Foundation Stage widely. The school has Healthy School status, is a designated School of Creativity, and holds a national award for its good practice in developing the skills of teaching assistants. Trainee teachers and assistants work for short periods in the school and other changes to the staff in the recent past result from a temporary leave of absence.

The governing body manages full day care for children from birth to three years old, before and after school care for children up to five years of age and extended care services throughout the year. The governing body also manages a Children's Centre which is on the same site as the school. It was inspected separately and the report is available on the Ofsted website.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is an outstanding nursery. Here children thrive and make good progress in their learning, and exceptional progress in all aspects of their personal development. Taken together, the outcomes for children are excellent as a result of a very rich and effective curriculum and care, guidance and support which is of the highest quality. By the end of nursery, children have made good progress to reach levels above those expected in most areas of learning. Satisfactory progress in mathematical development, in aspects of reading and knowledge and understanding of the world leads to attainment closer to expectation in these areas. Nearly all aspects of children's personal development are outstanding. They have a strong grasp of how to be healthy. They work confidently, safely and considerately and behave impeccably. These important factors are a vital part of their outstanding contribution to the school community. Children's outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their ability to learn through independent and group working are key factors in making them ready for the next stage in their education.

Provision is exemplary in many ways. Staff know the children very well and, drawing upon up-to-date understanding of how children learn, diligently plan and adapt activities to suit children's changing needs and interests. Teaching includes examples of excellence, though there are occasional inconsistencies where children are insufficiently challenged and opportunities are missed to accelerate their learning. Children's particular learning needs are carefully identified and skilled support given. The school's equality policy is rigorously followed to prevent discrimination and all children have equality of opportunity to learn. The school is at the heart of its community as a result of extremely good relationships with parents and carers which promote involvement in their children's education and exceptionally effective partnerships with the local authority and health services and the children's centre and day-care facilities on the same site.

Under the expert and dedicated leadership of the headteacher, staff and the governing body share the same philosophy of educating young children and a common purpose in the pursuit of excellence that prevails throughout the day-care provision and the nursery school. Through a strong and effective partnership with the staff, the governing body ensures that it knows the school well and gives strategic direction in an outstanding way. The school's identification of its many strengths is mostly accurate although evaluation lacks precision in the use of evidence to support review and planning for improvement. Taking these factors together the capacity for sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Consolidate arrangements to improve attainment and progress, especially in children's skills in mathematical development, in aspects of reading, and their knowledge and understanding of the world by:

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- - increasing the consistency of approach by all staff, both temporary and permanent, to challenge children and accelerate their learning
- - ensuring that review and evaluation are more precise to aid planning activities and measuring their success.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

1

Children thoroughly enjoy learning and achieve well. They have great enthusiasm for school. They eagerly join in planning activities with adults and classmates and, as active learners, they quickly seize opportunities to explore and investigate on their own or working together. Their excellent listening skills come to the fore when they contribute to discussions in both large and small groups.

Children begin nursery with skills and abilities broadly similar to those expected for children of their age. They make good progress in most areas of learning. Attainment has improved over the past two years and is above levels usually seen at the end of the Nursery Year. Children's progress in physical development is outstanding. One group, for example, handled cutlery with remarkable dexterity as they prepared vegetables and fruit to make salads. Many show good control of pencils and markers as their writing is beginning to develop legibility. Children make satisfactory progress in developing calculating skills although other aspects of their mathematical development are good. Their progress is satisfactory in linking sounds and letters when reading and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make equally good progress as their classmates with a few improving remarkably well. Children learning to speak English as an additional language make good progress and are clearly able to take a full part in play and learning activities.

Children settle very quickly and follow routines commendably well. As they go about their work, they show a very strong sense of feeling safe and secure. They are exceptionally knowledgeable about food, take care with personal hygiene and exercise energetically. Through many worthwhile opportunities they reflect upon feelings and the wonder of life, develop a sense of right and wrong and work and play with one another exceptionally well. Good levels of attendance, an excellent degree of confidence, well developed social skills and growing independence show children are well prepared for moving into the Reception Year.

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These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Children's attainment ¹	2
The quality of children's learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which children feel safe	1
Children's behaviour	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Children's attendance ¹	2
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers and assistants exploit their knowledge of how children learn in order to prepare and support activities that foster children's independence and curiosity. The successful basis for teaching and learning in the school is the highly effective session of guided discussions. During these times children, with the support of adults, plan the things they wish to do when playing and learning. Of particular note is their enthusiastic discussion of memorable moments that have occurred during the day. The most skilful staff carefully choose when to intervene and give support. They seize every opportunity to develop communication and language skills. At its most effective, such teaching adroitly prompts children to the next level of thinking. For example, in a whole-class session, children were highly excited and enthusiastic participants in a discussion about feelings promoted through a very skilful mix of drama, puppetry and story telling. On occasions though, less experienced staff offer too much help and restrict children's independence, or are not sufficiently alert to the chance to extend learning about letters and sounds. In turn, children do not make as much progress as they could.

Key workers know children and their families very well and keep their knowledge of children's development up-to-date through carefully made assessments of their progress. Learning journals usefully incorporate a photographic record and are a valuable medium for sharing information on children's progress with parents and carers. An exemplary

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feature is the way in which teachers and teaching assistants reflect on children's work at the end of the day and plan individual activities to follow on the day after. Making use of detailed analyses of children's assessments is developing well.

Children benefit enormously from the innovative and exciting curriculum. It offers substantial scope for active learning, widens their experience enormously and substantially fosters their outstanding personal development. Of especial note, is the way the school grounds are exploited: the school allotment is a superb resource to enhance many aspects of learning and build a very strong sense of community with families and helpers from the locality. The Forest School initiative does much to develop a strong sense of the importance of the environment and promote awe and wonder about the natural world. Many and varied visits, together with the contributions of visitors, enrich children's experience. Creative Partnerships play an outstanding part in developing pupils' social and cultural development, for example, through many art-based activities.

An atmosphere of care and welcome prevails throughout. Outstanding care is the bedrock of children's successful learning. Early assessments show when children have particular learning needs and, in partnership with external agencies and using expertise within the staff, effective support is given to help. In this way, weaknesses, particularly in speech and use of language, are addressed very successfully. Strong links with parents and carers successfully encourage participation and good attendance. Supervision is excellent and children are nurtured so they thrive by developing self-assurance and independence.

Provision in the day-care facility is good: children are safely cared for and in turn are happy and contented. Care and education are closely integrated with excellent resources and a good range of activities provided for the youngest children as well as for children aged three to five accessing the care in the morning or afternoon. Activities for older children are carefully arranged to complement those provided in the nursery. However, the planning of learning activities and the recording of progress for children aged two to three years are not yet contributing to continuity in all areas of learning in the nursery.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior leaders successfully realise their ambition and high expectations for all children to have the best possible start to their education. All staff work well together with a strong team spirit reflecting high morale and a firm sense of belonging. Attention to safeguarding is meticulous. The governing body has ensured that

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all requirements for children's welfare and childcare registration are met through good quality joint leadership and management of the day-care provision and the Early Years Foundation Stage in the nursery. Staff are well-trained in child protection and safeguarding and in turn they deal with any concerns in a proper and effective way. Importantly too, they ensure that children are able to conduct themselves with consideration for others and respect for property. The governing body provides excellent support and direction. They diligently consider detailed reports and complement their view of the school through a rigorous programme of visits and discussions with key staff. However, self-evaluation does not make sufficient use of the wealth of evidence available. For example, information about children's performance is not compared with benchmarks to measure progress accurately and other evidence is not used precisely to judge the quality of all aspects of the school's work. The governing body and school successfully ensure full equality of opportunity. Boys and girls make equally good progress. Children learning English as an additional language are fully integrated and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities successfully learn alongside their friends.

The school works very successfully to forge productive partnerships with parents and carers who in turn make extensive use of facilities available within the early excellence centre to further their own education. A wealth of information gives parents and carers useful ideas to help their children learn at home. As a result of this close cooperation, parents and carers express a very high degree of satisfaction with the school's provision for their children. Exceptionally strong partnerships with the local authority, higher education, community centres and curriculum development agencies here and abroad greatly enhance the school's work, enrich the curriculum and contribute markedly to community cohesion.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

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Views of parents and carers

A broadly average proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires and, almost all were entirely supportive. Of the small number who wrote comments, all were very positive and appreciative of the support their children receive. The inspection findings concur entirely with these views. The inspection looked into the small number of reservations parents or carers expressed about support for their children's learning at home and their behaviour. The school helps parents and carers in several ways and shares ideas, through leaflets, discussions and activities held on the premises. Children behaved impeccably during the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bedewell Early Excellence Childrens 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 inspection team received 30 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 78 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	87	4	13	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	80	6	20	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	20	67	10	33	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	77	7	23	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	77	7	23	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	77	6	20	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	87	4	13	0	0	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)	20	67	7	23	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	77	7	23	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	70	7	23	2	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	83	5	17	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	87	4	13	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	87	4	13	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 children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
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 children. 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 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 2009/10 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 child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
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 children 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 children.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

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.



16 February 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Bedewell Early Excellence Children's Centre, Hebburn, NE31 1QY

I really enjoyed my time with you in your nursery. I could see how much you like being there because there are so many interesting things to do. You have some wonderful places where you learn and play, such as the art studio, the out-door area, the allotment and Forest School. I am sure you will remember for a long time things you have done and found out about. All the adults care for you and look after you very well. They make sure you are safe and happy and that you can learn and play in many ways.

Yours is an outstanding nursery. I was delighted to see how quickly you settle in and join discussions in your groups when you are planning things to do. I was also delighted to see how you think about other people, share things and take turns. I was impressed by how well you look after the toys and equipment and the speedy way you tidy up when asked. I looked at the photographs of you at work and I saw how much you are learning whilst in the nursery. To make your learning even better your teachers are going to plan more activities for you to solve problems and use numbers, to learn more about letters and sounds to help you with reading and writing and learn more about many things in the world around us.

You have many opportunities in the Nursery at Bedewell Early Excellence Centre to learn about life and these help you to prepare for your next school. I hope that you all do really well.

Yours sincerely,

Graeme Clarke
Lead Inspector

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