

Kingsland Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123957
Local Authority	Stoke-On-Trent
Inspection number	359552
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Deborah Udakis HMI

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 of pupils on the school roll	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Trevor Weaver
Headteacher	Mrs Nicola Mulliner
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector. Inspectors carried out 10 lesson observations and all teachers and early years practitioners were seen. Meetings took place with governors, staff and partners. Discussions also took place with parents and carers during the course of the inspection. Inspectors observed the nursery's work, and looked at children's learning journeys, progress tracking and assessments, safeguarding arrangements, the curriculum, policies and procedures. The responses from 22 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.

- The effectiveness and accuracy of the nursery's assessment and tracking systems and what steps have been taken to improve the attainment of all children.
- Whether the teaching addresses the needs of children, particularly higher-attaining children, lower-attaining children and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in identifying and driving through priorities in order to improve the performance of all children.

Information about the school

This average-sized nursery provides full-time education for children prior to their joining Reception classes in other primary schools. The nursery shares a site with a kindergarten, children's centre and local primary school all of which are led and managed separately. Children attending the nursery are predominantly from White British backgrounds. Currently, very few children speak English as an additional language, of these all are at the early stages of learning the language. One fifth of children, this is broadly average, have special educational needs and/or disabilities; their needs are chiefly speech and language related. Almost half of the children are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has the Healthy School status and has also received the Silver Eco Schools 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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Kingsland is an outstanding nursery. It offers the highest standard of care alongside excellence in learning. The energetic and highly-influential leadership of the headteacher drives improvement within the nursery and they receive wonderful support from highly skilled and committed staff. She has created an excellent team spirit that runs through all parts of the nursery. As a result morale is high and everyone feels valued. The nursery reviews its work rigorously and is determined, 'not to rest on its laurels' in its pursuit of excellence. High quality self-evaluation identifies areas of further improvement. The dedicated governing body keeps a very close eye on provision and outcomes and gives good support to the school and its parents and carers. Some governors with lead responsibilities demonstrate a high level of skill and expertise in their assigned subject but this is not consistently the case for all members of the governing body. The capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is overall well below what is normally expected of three-year-olds, across all areas of learning. From their low starting points, children make outstanding progress and, by the time they transfer to local primary schools, the attainment of most children matches their age expectations. The quality of teaching is outstanding overall. Staff make excellent use of observations and assessment to plan for the child's next steps in learning. However, instances of low attendance are having a negative impact on the attainment of some children.

The nursery provides outstanding outdoor play opportunities. The fantastic 'Creative Partnerships' initiative engages with a wide range of professionals with skills and expertise to enrich the children's learning. All children enthusiastically take part in specialist music sessions with a music teacher, and develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through design and technology sessions with an engineer. The 'Bottle Kiln' in the outdoor play area celebrates the city's cultural identity and provides a superb space to promote children's communication, language and literacy. The structure provides a lovely welcoming covered space in the outdoor area and is an exceptional achievement of the Creative Partnership with the engineer who built the structure in consultation with children and staff.

Most children's behaviour is outstanding and parents unanimously agree that their children are very safe at the nursery. Children have great trust in adults to look after them and they receive excellent care, guidance and support from expertly caring staff. They follow the superb example set by adults in caring for each other and following routines that make the nursery a happy and secure community in which to learn. Children take great pride as they undertake roles of responsibility as 'special helpers', and 'Rainbow Warriors' as part of the nursery's commitment as an Eco School.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the level of children's attainment and improve children's overall attendance by engaging with parents and carers and impressing on them the importance of regular attendance to ensure their children benefit fully from all that is provided for them by March 2012.
- Develop the role of governors with lead responsibilities to ensure their skills and expertise are matched to the needs of the school and are used to improve their ability to hold the nursery to account.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

1

Teachers show high expectations of children and this is evidenced by the predominantly outstanding progress seen in lessons. For instance, during the 'Time to Talk' lesson the teacher established a situation where all children's contributions were valued. In one lesson a child who entered the nursery unable to speak English confidently had made great strides forward and clearly described the work he was doing using full sentences. Children clearly become self-assured, happy, confident learners during their time in the nursery. In all of the activities observed, both indoors and out, children were seen to have excellent relationships with the adults who helped them learn. Individual needs are catered for very well especially for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, and those new to speaking English as an additional language who make outstanding progress. Children thoroughly enjoy all that is on offer, particularly the exciting activities provided through the 'Creative Partnerships' and this helps them to make excellent gains in their achievement. During a phonics session the teacher made excellent use of props. 'Wizzle the Wizard', a fabulous hand puppet, helped to engage children and support their outstanding progress as they moved on to sounding out four-letter words with confidence. Children's reflections and concentration were encouraged and supported during a challenging memory game. By the end of their time in nursery, children's attainment is as expected for their ages with some exceeding these levels.

Children from different backgrounds get on extremely well. They quickly learn to share and take turns because adults promote the development of personal and social skills as excellent role models. Children's spiritual, moral and social development is catered for extremely well. There are plenty of local opportunities for celebrating the traditions and values of other cultures. For example, children recently celebrated Chinese New Year; they have also taken part in Bhangra dance and Brazilian carnival events. Snack and meal times are excellent social occasions. All children have a cooked lunch at the nursery and are very aware of why they should eat healthily. Children feel extremely safe and very happy, and know that there is always someone to comfort them if they feel sad. They learn to work together as a team when they tidy up at the end of sessions. When they work in their garden or take on the role of 'special helpers' and Rainbow Warriors, or raise money for charities, children become aware of working together and helping others. They conscientiously made cakes during the day to sell in aid of 'Red Nose day' and showed great restraint by making sure they only ate one each. Attendance is average and, despite a range of creative procedures to encourage full attendance, it has been affected by the illness of some children and a few persistent absences.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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	3
The quality of children's learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
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	2
Taking into account:	
Children's attendance ¹	3
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?

Children receive positive targeted interventions and support to ensure that they make outstanding progress. Sessions are organised well and adults use a range of teaching methods successfully to involve children in their own learning and ensure lessons are fun. For example, the use of props, such as hand puppets, feature strongly in effective lessons, and staff use photographs to help children reflect on their learning. Several children were observed squealing with delight as they watched a recording of their music lesson on the wide-screen television in the nursery. They also bring learning alive by using the excellent information and communication technology available, including electronic boards and computers, to enhance their learning. The 'Jumping Jacks' group includes higher-attaining children and ensures that they receive regular extra support to challenge their thinking. They were involved in a problem-solving session which provided them with complex challenges. The teacher provided high-quality support and questioning to aid the children's learning. The curriculum is broad and varied and is significantly enhanced by the additional activities provided through the 'Creative Partnerships'. A range of creative partners provide storytelling from around the world and exciting projects such as 'Go with the Flow', where the children were supported to make use of recycling materials to enhance the creative aspects of outdoor play. Learning opportunities are excellent and,

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consequently, all children show immense enjoyment in learning, both indoors and outdoors. They participate eagerly in small-group time, independent play and exploration, and when taking part in music sessions. Learning was excellent in another activity where the children used the outdoor area to act out the story of the 'Three Little Pigs'. The adult intervened expertly to extend learning. Teamwork among the staff is exemplary and this contributes very significantly to the outstanding learning that takes place. Enjoyment, enthusiasm and much excitement are evident wherever the children are learning and playing. Children are challenged to experiment, collaborate and explore through a wide range of activities. Staff are skilled at knowing when to intervene and when to stand back to enable the children to find things out for themselves. They assess children's development carefully using skilful observations to understand individual children's development and to identify the next steps they need to take in their learning. There are attractive displays and high-quality resources, which together stimulate children's interest and encourage them to explore and investigate.

All children make excellent progress because their welfare needs are exceptionally well met. Care, guidance and support for families, as well as for children, are exemplary. Staff provide regular workshops and sessions for parents and carers to keep them in touch with their children's work. For example, many parents and carers take part in the regular 'Stay and Play' sessions where they support their child's learning. In addition, several parents and carers have attended the 'Positive Parenting Programme' facilitated by the nursery in close collaboration and partnership with the staff from the children's centre. Attendance is encouraged with a range of rewards including the issuing of certificates for good attendance and the use of assemblies to celebrate improved attendance. These are having a positive impact on some children's attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of teaching	1
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?

Leaders and managers are highly motivated and effective. They provide outstanding leadership and the nursery provides excellent value for money. The headteacher, who is very well supported by all staff, has a thorough overview of provision and learning. She is an inspirational leader and is tireless in her pursuit of excellence. There is a great sense of pride and belonging in the nursery. Staff morale is very high and teamwork is excellent. Both leaders and staff are keen to share their expertise both within and beyond the nursery. The headteacher is recognised by her peers for her outstanding leadership and works in partnership with other settings to develop consistently high-quality provision.

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Management and financial systems are highly efficient and ensure the smooth running of the nursery.

Safeguarding is given a very high priority among leaders, managers and staff. Staff regularly attend child protection and welfare training and are exceptionally well equipped to spot and deal with concerns. The governing body is effective. Governors are robust in discharging their statutory responsibilities, ensuring that the views of stakeholders are considered. Many members of the governing body have attended training and induction to enhance their knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities. However, those who have not demonstrate some limitations of their expertise in their allocated designated responsibilities. The nursery's equality policy is rigorously followed and regularly evaluated so that any potential discrimination or barriers to learning are removed and all children access high-quality learning. Community cohesion is a strong aspect of the nursery's work particularly within the local community and through national links. The nursery is developing its global links with a similar type of nursery school in South Korea. Careful planning enables children to learn about other customs and traditions and they enjoy having visitors from home and abroad while they are in their nursery.

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	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are very supportive of the nursery and hold the work of the headteacher and teachers in high regard. These views were confirmed by the parents and carers met during the inspection. The most positive written response related to the headteacher and her team and the highly-positive experiences they provide for the children. The inspectors endorse these positive comments.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kingsland Nursery School 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 22 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 60 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	68	7	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	16	73	6	27	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	12	55	10	45	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	59	9	41	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	13	59	8	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	64	8	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	59	9	41	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)	11	50	9	41	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	55	9	41	1	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	55	9	41	1	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	55	9	41	1	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	64	7	32	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	13	59	8	36	1	5	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.



18 March 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Kingsland Nursery School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST2 9AS

Thank you all for helping me to have such a lovely time in your nursery. You were all very kind and let me join in with your games and play and storytelling.

Your nursery is excellent and gives you all very happy days learning all about the things that interest you. You have so many lovely things to choose from indoors and outside in the exciting outdoor play area. You are learning very quickly and know so many new things each day. No wonder your families and teachers are so proud of you. I could see that your teachers look after you extremely well, so that you feel safe and happy in nursery. Your families think so too, and are very pleased that you go to such a happy place to learn.

The headteacher, all the teachers and the governors want the very best for you, so that you do the best you can and find out everything you want to know. They all work hard to make things better for you every day. To help them do this we have asked them to encourage you to attend nursery every day so you can learn as much as you can. We have also asked the governing body to provide more challenge and keep closer checks on the school.

You can help by always working as hard as you can.

We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Udakis

Her Majesty's Inspector

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