

Oxclose Nursery Community School

Brancepeth Road, Oxclose Village, Washington, NE38 0LA

Inspection dates 25–26 March 2015

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | This inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership and management | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Quality of teaching | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Children thrive during their time at this nursery school. Each child is known and valued as a unique individual. They are happy, confident and very keen to learn.
- The school is outstandingly led by the head teacher and senior leadership team who have driven forward improvements at a rapid pace since the last inspection. As a result, teaching and children's achievement are outstanding.
- Governors are highly dedicated and know the school exceptionally well. They work very closely with the senior leadership team to ensure that the quality of teaching continues to improve.
- Inclusion is very well promoted. Children with special educational needs, including those in the resourced based unit, receive well-targeted support. Because their individual, often complex, needs are fully met these children make excellent progress.
- Partnership working with outside agencies is excellent. No time is wasted in securing any additional help needed for children.
- Staff have an in-depth knowledge of what children in their key groups like and are able to do. As a result, activities planned inspire children to learn.
- Many of the highly-skilled staff use questioning very effectively to help deepen children's understanding.
- The rich programme of activities provided every day, both indoors and outdoors stimulates learning exceptionally well.
- The nursery is a very calm and orderly place. Adults promote respect for others, tolerance and fairness. These qualities help young children to prepare for the next stage of their education.
- Children feel completely safe and behaviour is excellent. This is due to well-established routines and the staff's high expectations.
- The nursery places great emphasis on developing children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This practice makes a significant contribution to their personal development.
- The nursery has worked exceptionally hard to develop highly positive relationships with parents. Parents typically comment that 'the school deserves credit for all the hard work and effort they put in daily which has reflected on the outcomes for children'.

Information about this inspection

- During the two days of the inspection, inspectors observed children’s learning as they played indoors and outdoors. They also observed focused key groups sessions. The headteacher took part in two joint observations with the inspectors.
- Discussions were held with the children, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and members of staff. The inspector met with two members of the governing body and with a representative of the local authority. Inspectors talked to parents at the beginning of the day as they dropped their children off at the nursery.
- In addition, inspectors considered a range of school documentation. These included the school’s own review of its performance, the school improvement plans, children’s learning journeys, data on children’s progress, documents on safeguarding and planning records.
- The inspectors scrutinised the 26 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire (Parent View.) In addition, inspectors took account of the schools’ own parental survey and considered the responses of 11 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Sheila Iwaskow, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Karen Ling

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized nursery school.
- Children attend on a part time-basis, either mornings, afternoons or two-and-a-half days a week.
- Almost all of the children are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of children who are disabled or who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- The nursery school has resourced based provision for a small number of children with complex medical and physical needs.
- The governing body of the school also manages Oxclose Community Child Care which is located on the same site. This provision is subject to separate inspection arrangements and details of which can be found on the Ofsted website.
- A new Chair of the Governing Body has been appointed since the last inspection.
- The nursery school has been awarded Healthy School Status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all staff consistently apply the use of questioning to further deepen children's understanding.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leadership and management of the school is very strong. The headteacher is passionate in her determination to ensure that the school provides the very best possible start for all the children in her care. She is fully supported by her very able deputy headteacher, inclusion officer and talented staff team. A typical comment from one member of staff was 'all staff are so passionate about the setting and strive to make the nursery school the best it can be'.
- Senior leaders have an excellent understanding of effective early years practice. Senior leaders set out a development plan with clear priorities for further development. These are shared with and understood by all staff. Since the last inspection senior leaders have demonstrated a relentless drive to improve successfully outcomes for all groups of children in the nursery. This has ensured the very effective promotion of equality of opportunity.
- Senior leaders undertake research projects in subjects such as mark making and schemas (patterns of repeatable behaviour that can often be noticed in young children's play). The results of this research are shared with other early years setting in the local area to enhance practitioners' knowledge and children's progress and learning.
- The excellent management of the resource unit is enhanced by a fruitful partnership with other professional agencies.
- Senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching rigorously through formal and informal observations. High quality written feedback identifies strengths and areas for development for which aspirational targets are set. Staff have very good opportunities to attend additional training. This helps them develop their practice and become even better at helping all groups of children achieve to the very best of their ability. Teachers' pay is closely linked to the progress that children make at the nursery.
- The school's outstanding provision is underpinned by a curriculum that provides many additional activities. For example, children travel on a bus to a local wildlife park and make regular visits to the beach. Coaches from Sunderland football club come to the nursery and engage children in a range of exciting activities which develop their physical skills. They also take part in a 'community litter pick' which raises children's awareness of keeping their immediate environment clean and safe.
- Taking into account that the nursery is located in an area that is predominately White British, great care is taken to ensure that children gain an appreciation of the diversity of the world in which they live. To highlight this awareness children celebrate a variety of cultural festivals and taste food from around the world. Visitors have also been invited into the nursery to discuss aspects of their culture. This lays a firm foundation for their life in modern Britain and indicates leaders' determination to tackle any discrimination.
- Leaders very effectively foster good relationships. The partnership with parents is very strong. There are daily opportunities to share information with their child's key person. Parents are kept very well informed about their child's progress and contribute to initial assessments and their learning journeys. Workshops in key curriculum areas are provided by staff to encourage parents to take an active part in their children's understanding. The nursery has also worked with parents to develop their awareness of healthy eating. Parents came into school and cooked healthy meals with their children which resulted in a cookery book being produced with healthy recipes.
- The local authority holds this school in the highest regard and provides it with effective 'light touch support'.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective and meet requirements and in many respects goes beyond these. Similarly welfare requirements are being met. Children and adults feel very safe as a result.
- The website contains all the required information and is a valuable resource for parents.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly effective in carrying out their role and are extremely knowledgeable about the school. They have a high profile around the nursery and take an active part in the school's life. Governors offer the school high levels of support and challenge in equal measure. They share the headteacher's ambitious drive for continuous improvement. They have a very good understanding of the progress that all groups of children are making within the school. They fully understand the quality of teaching and the link between pay and performance. Governors also know how they would tackle underperformance. Finances are well managed and governors are diligent in their role regarding safeguarding. Regular training is accessed to ensure that they have the skills to fulfil their roles.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of children is outstanding.
- Children are too busy learning, exploring and investigating to get into mischief. Minor squabbles are rare and very soon sorted out.
- Exceptional care is given to all children, including those with special educational needs and from the resourced based provision. As a result, children play harmoniously, share and take turns. There is no bullying and no discrimination against anyone.
- Staff share very warm relationships with the children and are excellent role models. As a result, children are considerate polite and very kind. As one parent commented, 'my child corrects herself if she doesn't say please or thank you'.
- Noteworthy examples of children's behaviour are displayed on a 'kindness tree'. These include a child helping another put their coat on, a child putting the 'wet floor' cone on a slippery floor and a child helping another get off a chair when his leg got stuck. Such acts of kindness teach children about fairness, tolerance and respect.
- Typically, children attend regularly which reflects their enjoyment of the nursery and their eagerness to learn.

Safety

- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is outstanding.
- The site is very secure and regular and thorough checks are made to ensure that the buildings and grounds are free from danger.
- Rigorous checks are made to ensure the suitability of visitors to the nursery. All staff have also undergone relevant checks to determine their suitability to work with children. Leaders also make sure that staff are fully trained to cope with a medical emergency.
- In outdoor activities based around the natural world children learn about keeping safe in the wood. They take part in regular fire evacuation procedures which teaches them how to get out of the nursery in the event of a fire. In addition, visitors such as the police and fire officer come into the nursery to talk to the children about safe practices.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is of a consistently high quality and adults miss no opportunity to develop children's learning. Staff are very experienced and have an excellent knowledge of how to promote the development of children of this age.
- Staff know the children very well and have high expectations for them. Staff are very well deployed throughout the day.
- The classrooms and outdoor area are spacious. They are very well resourced and are used exceptionally well to provide all groups of children, including those from the resourced based unit who are fully integrated into the main school, with a wide range of exciting activities. There are no barriers to learning and such excellent practice highlights the nursery's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- The outstanding teaching is underpinned by meticulous planning and accurate assessment. Evidence of children's achievements are beautifully presented in children's learning journeys, clearly showing what children know, can do and need to learn next.
- A love of reading is fostered very well throughout the nursery. Children enjoy reading stories on their own or as part of a larger group. They have an excellent awareness of book terminology. Children clearly understand the differing roles of the author and illustrator as well as the purpose of the 'blurb' on the back cover of the book.
- Books are used as a focal point for the planning of mini-projects. For example, professional storytellers are invited to the school to develop children's love of traditional stories and their imaginative skills. Through the excellent use of resources, children are given the opportunity to enact the story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. They learn that porridge is a healthy food, explore the mathematical concept of size, and appreciate the importance of sharing and of not throwing litter on the ground. Such wonderful experiences fully capture children's interests, develop their sense of awe and wonder and contribute significantly to their spiritual, moral and social development.

- Every opportunity is taken to develop early mathematical skills and these are expertly incorporated into many activities that children encounter. For example at snack time, children discuss the shape of crackers and calculate if there are enough for 10 children. At registration, they count the number of boys and girls present and work out how many there are all together. During focused activities they have fun ordering numbers and, as they play outdoors, children explore the concepts of fast and slow as they roll balls down slanted guttering.
- Children chat happily as they play. Staff show them the correct use of language and reinforce that already learnt.
- Staff plan many different ways for children to develop their writing skills both indoors and out. A full range of writing tools are offered including paint and chalk. Children enthusiastically write their own names forming recognisable letters.
- Not all staff use questioning well to develop and extend children's learning. However, there are examples of how this is applied effectively. For example at story time a teacher asked the children the meaning of the word enormous. Children gave a variety of responses including 'huge' and 'big'. To deepen their understanding further the teacher then asked them to think of other words that meant enormous.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- A minority of children come into the nursery with skills that are below those typical for their age. However, a large proportion of children enter with major challenges particularly in their personal, social, emotional and physical development. In addition, for many children, this is the first time they have attended an educational setting. Children make excellent progress and achieve very well with a significant proportion leaving the school with skills higher than those typically seen in children entering Reception year. As a result, children are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Taking into account their very diverse needs, children with special educational needs, including those from the resourced based provision, make excellent progress in relation to their starting points. Staff have a very clear understanding of their individual needs. They work in close partnership with other professionals such as physiotherapists, educational psychologists and speech and language therapists to ensure that the needs of these children are fully addressed.
- The development of children's personal, social and emotional skills is a key priority for the school and children make very good progress in this area of their learning. High levels of independence are promoted as children are encouraged to tidy up, zip up their own coats and hand out snacks. They very quickly gain confidence to mix with other children and become very secure with the routines that operate within the nursery school.
- High emphasis is also put on developing children's physical skills. Children also make very good progress in this area of their learning in relation to their starting points. They confidently climb trees, balance on beams, handle small tools such as scissors with increasing control and position their bodies in different ways on the climbing frame.
- The needs of the most able are very quickly identified. Key people ensure that more challenging work is provided when children are engaging in focused activities and in independent play. This ensures that they are being fully challenged in all areas of their learning. For example, in the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) the most able are very quickly moved on to a more challenging phase.
- Meticulous tracking ensures that the progress of groups is very effectively monitored and that any underperformance is dealt with in a timely manner. For example, senior leaders noted that a small group of younger boys were not making as much progress as they should. These boys were put into a key group and much of their learning was planned outdoors which appealed to their interests. As a result of this prompt intervention, these boys soon caught up with their peers.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | Grade | Judgement | Description |
|--------|---------|----------------------|--|
| | Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| | Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| | Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| | Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 108751 |
| Local authority | Sunderland |
| Inspection number | 449516 |

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

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| Type of school | Nursery |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 3–4 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 85 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | David Baker |
| Headteacher | Julie Heron |
| Date of previous school inspection | 18 April 2012 |
| Telephone number | 0191 219 3618 |
| Fax number | 0191 219 3619 |
| Email address | oxclose.nursery@schools.sunderland.gov.uk |

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