



Cruddas Park Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108428
LEA Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number 277968
Inspection dates 3 April 2006 to 4 April 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Gianna Ulyatt

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Brunel Terrace
School category	Maintained		Newcastle upon Tyne
Age range of pupils	3 to 4		Tyne and Wear, NE4 7NL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 2736682
Number on roll	58	Fax number	0191 2721232
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Cllr John O'Shea
Date of previous inspection	1 November 1999	Headteacher	Ms Jan Rogers-Wood

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Cruddas Park Nursery School is a designated Early Years Centre within Westgate Children's Centre. It serves some of the poorest neighbourhoods in the country. Children attend full time and are aged between two and a half and four years. Around one third of children do not speak English at home. Very few have learning difficulties, although a high number of children have poor speech and language skills. The nursery has national acclaim for its work with children from birth to three years and offers a range of extended services, including a drop-in centre for parents and after-school play provision.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The inspection confirms the school's own overall judgement that this is a good school, with some outstanding features. The nursery is highly valued in and beyond its community. One particularly delighted parent wrote that her child is 'coming on leaps and bounds'. Outstanding leadership and good teaching ensure that children make good progress. From a very low start, they achieve extremely well in personal, social and emotional development, and almost reach the level expected for their age. Children behave well and become confident, caring and active learners. The outstanding curriculum makes learning fun and enables the children to achieve well all-round. However, in spite of the good teaching, the majority do not reach expectations in other areas of learning. Detailed assessment arrangements guide teachers' planning, but they could be more effectively linked to national targets. Provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who do not speak English at home is good and both groups achieve well. The school makes excellent use of health and education agencies, and of additional funding from a range of sources, for the benefit of all the children. Governance is experienced and effective. The headteacher and deputy headteacher lead the school inspirationally and imaginatively. They have managed recent changes very well. The significant improvements made since the last inspection reflect a strong capacity to improve the nursery further. They are very clear about the nursery's strengths, but have not yet formalised systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. They do not make enough use of the outcomes of assessment to identify specific areas for improvement. However, the school has identified these areas in its school improvement plan as priorities for development. The nursery provides good value for money.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop assessment systems matched to national targets, and ensure that these are manageable so that variations in progress and gaps in learning can be easily identified.
- Strengthen the use of assessment systems to evaluate the nursery's effectiveness and to identify specific areas for improvement.
- Formalise the systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children's attainment on entry has a wide range but for the majority it is well below what is typical for their age. Many have particularly weak language skills; some hardly speak at all, whilst others use single words to express their needs. Their social and emotional development is extremely immature and their mathematical understanding, weak. Children make good progress from these very low starting points because of the extensive range of inspiring first-hand experiences in a caring and calm

environment. However, overall attainment for the majority is below expectation by the time they leave the nursery. They achieve particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development, where some almost reach the expected level for their age. They also achieve well in their physical and creative development. Children's difficulty in expressing their thoughts limits their attainment in early reading, writing and counting skills. This is despite the positive efforts by staff to support their language and mathematical development. Children enjoy examining natural objects but have limited vocabularies with which to put their ideas into words. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who do not speak English at home make good gains in their understanding. Some of the very few children with above average ability do not make as much progress as they could because some activities, particularly in early literacy and mathematics, do not present enough challenge for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The nursery transforms the lives of its children and rightly views their personal development as good. Children enjoy coming to school and they approach their activities with great interest and motivation. They show good levels of concentration, as when painting or when balancing and climbing. Children are well behaved and, because they have a positive attitude, they play amicably together. Children follow instructions well and know how to be adventurous on physical equipment without being fearful. They feel safe in the nursery and know who to turn to should they need help. Children enjoy their lunch and talk about the way fruit and milk makes you strong. They know they need soap and water to wash hands before meals. They enjoy vigorous activity each day. Children are increasingly responsible in the way they choose activities and are well prepared for the Reception class. Although the nursery encourages good attendance, currently this is satisfactory. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They learn about the wonders of life when they watch birds feeding or when they find worms in the garden, and they participate well in a range of cultural celebrations.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning have improved and are now good. This matches the school's judgement. Staff clearly understand how young children learn. They have a warm and friendly approach and interact sensitively to encourage children's concentration and independence. They provide a stimulating and well resourced environment, which captivates all children and supports those who find learning difficult. Personal, social and emotional development is promoted well and children form good friendships, as was seen when four boys played sensibly together in role. Staff place good emphasis on speaking skills by explaining new words and encouraging children to talk about pictures in books. Teaching outdoors develops children's curiosity and physical skills

well. Assessment systems are satisfactory, even though very comprehensive records are kept of children's progress. Staff know each child very well, and they assess them frequently through specially planned activities and through activities children choose for themselves. They use the results to decide on the next stage in a child's learning. However, they do not record this information in a way that makes it easy for them to check on children's progress in relation to what is expected of them and national targets. Staff are not as clear as they might be, therefore, about whether they should be challenging some children to achieve more.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is excellent, which is better than the school's judgement. For the under threes, it is innovative and truly inspiring and has a strong and positive effect on their social and emotional development, and their bodily awareness. The nursery works hard to ensure that children progress smoothly into the nationally guided curriculum for the Foundation Stage. For these children, the curriculum is practical and includes an extensive range of exciting activities. These motivate children and enhance learning in all areas because the activities focus on ideas generated by the children and on seasonal topics. Staff allocate plenty of time for children to explore their own interests. They involve children in a range of real-life experiences, such as the beach scenario or making bird cakes. They provide well for children to learn how to stay safe and healthy. The adventurous outside area is used well and the nursery is currently expanding this provision. Enrichment activities, including visits out of school, inspire children and they thoroughly enjoy working with the resident artist.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support offered to children are outstanding because the nursery keeps children's well-being at the heart of all it does. Full risk assessments are carried out and child protection procedures are in place. The seamless transition from the 'family room' for the youngest children to the 'workshop' for older children, ensures that all feel safe and secure as they move through the nursery. All children receive good individual support and guidance wherever needed because staff work actively with them and carefully monitor their progress. Parents receive ample information about their child's achievements. They say staff give freely of their time to talk to parents informally, as well as at pre-arranged meetings. Induction procedures are very thorough, and some parents bring their pre-nursery children to the centre's 'drop-in' facility. The nursery's good links with primary schools ensure that children are happy and ready to move to the Reception class.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The inspirational quality and effect of the leadership have made the school a recognised model for other nurseries. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have an exceptionally clear vision for the nursery and have led it successfully through extensive changes. They value the views and expertise of all staff, so that all feel an important part of the team and work hard to provide a very stimulating environment. There is a high level of shared commitment to the life and effectiveness of the school. This is clearly seen in the nursery's direct involvement in national research and high quality staff development through the 'Birth-to-Three-Matters Framework'. Links with parents are strong, as are the links with external agencies that help to make the nursery fully inclusive. Leadership has done much to improve the nursery since the last inspection. This includes developing the buildings and resourcing the outdoor area. Planning focuses better on what children are intended to learn. The improvement plan lists major priorities and appropriate action. However, the nursery does not make enough use of assessment information to evaluate its effectiveness and identify specific areas for improvement. The monitoring of teaching and learning is still too informal. The governing body fully supports the school and its management. It has members who are very experienced and thus well placed both to challenge and develop its work. The nursery has good capacity to improve. Financial systems for managing the newly delegated budget are appropriate and resources are managed very efficiently.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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3 April 2006

Dear Children

You may remember that I came to your school to find out how well you are doing. It was a delight to talk to so many friendly children. You are very lucky to be in such a good nursery. I loved watching you saw wood to make the rocket. I liked the way you carefully placed yeast in the flour to make bread. The birds' nests were beautiful and I hope the birds enjoyed the cakes you made for them. The beach is a lovely place to play in and the game with light is amazing.

I especially like the way you choose activities and listen to your teachers. You play very well together and many of you have lovely, kind friends. You have a lovely garden and I could see how much you enjoy being outside. You are very clever at climbing high and riding tricycles. I love your art work and it decorates the rooms very well.

I have asked the grown-ups to keep a tighter check on the way you are learning so that some of you learn to do even harder things. You in turn must continue to be well behaved and always do your best.

Best wishes

Gianna Ulyatt

Lead inspector