

Bensham Grove Community Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108320
Local Authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	309646
Inspection date	1 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Linda Buller

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 on roll	
School	67
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Joe Mitchinson
Headteacher	Miss Karen Little
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2005
School address	Sidney Grove Bensham Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE8 2XD
Telephone number	0191 433 4090
Fax number	0191 433 4090

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and the following issues: how effectively the school is improving standards and achievement in linking sounds and letters, writing and knowledge and understanding of the world; how effectively the provision of a key worker for each child contributes to their achievement and well-being, and how well leadership and management bring about improvement.

Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, records of children's progress and the assessments of the standards they attain, from observing teaching and learning, from analysis of children's records of achievement and from discussions with children, staff and governors. Parents' responses to the Ofsted questionnaire were analysed. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation were not justified and these have been included in this report.

Description of the school

Bensham Grove Nursery School shares its accommodation within a Children's Centre Nursery which was registered as integral to the this maintained nursery school in 2005. Extended services, including day and out-of-school hours care are provided by the Centre and are used in conjunction with nursery provision to meet individual needs. This means that although the Bensham Grove Nursery provides mainly part-time places for children from their third birthday, many parents extend this to full-time provision through the addition of the child care element. The nursery draws children from an area where socio-economic circumstances are lower than the average nationally. Most children are of White British heritage and speak English at home. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The Children's Centre Nursery was not part of the inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding nursery school. There are significant strengths in systems of leadership and management that lead to sustained improvement and children's outstanding achievement and personal development. Children benefit extremely well from the excellent quality of care, guidance and support they receive. This view is borne out by parents who in the main are delighted with the school's work. They make comments such as, 'fantastic school, great balance between structure and play. I leave my daughter confident she will be safe and happy'.

Children love coming to the nursery and attend regularly. The nursery environment is one of care and security where children develop their confidence and meet new challenges. The special emphasis on children's emotional development results in rapid gains in their personal and social skills including high levels of independence. Children are clear about what is expected of them, and their behaviour is excellent. They work and play extremely safely together and learn how to live healthily by eating fruit and enjoying active outdoor play. Those who find learning difficult or who are upset, for whatever reason, are very sensitively supported by the staff. An excellent partnership is in place between the school and other agencies, for example, children whose speech is under-developed are supported well by specialists. Many benefits arise from the excellent links between the maintained nursery and the Children's Centre Nursery, not least that the attainment on entry to the maintained nursery is rising. Attainment on entry to the nursery is now typical of children of this age in most areas of learning due to the increasing number of children who are benefiting from the children's centre provision. Children who take advantage of the centre's early learning opportunities have a smooth and trouble free transition into nursery education.

Outstanding leadership and management have ensured that the nursery has continued to make excellent progress since the previous inspection, which found all aspects to be very good. The school have improved children's achievement with a greater emphasis on what each child needs to learn next. As a result, by the time they leave the nursery the majority of children are now attaining levels well above those expected for children of their age having made very good progress from their given starting points with no significant difference in the achievement of different groups. Self-evaluation is very rigorous and has been used to great effect to set priorities for improvement. This includes increased opportunities for children to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world and for the development of their early writing skills. Very effective links are made between areas of learning so that at all times of the day children are improving their knowledge of letters and sounds, an area of learning previously identified as an area for further improvement.

One of the key factors in the nursery's success is the allocation of a key worker for each child. Not only does this provide each child and their parents with a named adult with whom they know they can share any problems and concerns but also ensures effective monitoring of how well children are doing. Staff work extremely well as a team. Teaching meets the needs of all children very effectively with good use made of the information gained from monitoring to plan exciting experiences and activities. Whether children are exploring the changes in the tadpoles or setting out tea with the special china tea set staff engage them in meaningful conversation which extends their knowledge and understanding. As a result, children discover that learning is an exciting and fun activity that comes from a range of stimulating experiences and they are very well prepared for the next stage of education, both academically and socially.

The senior leadership team, led very effectively by the headteacher, is always looking for ways to improve the nursery; they are keen to make provision even stronger. Governance is very effective and governors are fully involved in monitoring the outcomes for children. The nursery is in a superb position to continue to improve in the future.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

As a nursery school, the Foundation Stage is completely covered by the Overall Effectiveness section.

What the school should do to improve further

There are no significant areas for improvement.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

3 April 2008

Dear Children,

Inspection of Bensham Grove Community Nursery School, Gateshead,

NE8 2XD

Thank you very much for welcoming me to your nursery school. I really enjoyed chatting with you. The things you told me helped me to learn a lot about how much you like coming to school. Your mums and dads think that you go to a fantastic school, and I agree with them. Your nursery is a really good place to learn. I liked seeing how well you get along. You are really good at being friendly with each other and sharing your games. You do very well in helping to keep yourselves fit and healthy by eating fruit each day and having lots of exercise when you play outside.

All of the grown-ups work really well together to make sure you have lots of interesting things to do indoors and outside. They look after you very well and make sure that you are safe and happy. Everyone works really hard to make sure you all learn as well as you can and to make sure your school gets better and better. This is why they now make sure you have lots of chances to learn your letters, to watch things grow and to find out things on your own.

It is really good that you are all doing so well and I hope you carry on enjoying school and learning lots of interesting things.

Yours sincerely,

Linda Buller

Lead inspector