

Goodway Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103128
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	376825
Inspection dates	11–12 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Mary Hinds

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	84
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gordon Lee
Headteacher	Beth O'Neill (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	14 July 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Ten sessions of learning were observed, involving six practitioners. Discussions were held with parents and carers, staff and the Chair of the Governing Body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at children's work, assessments, learning journals, a local authority review, planning, 21 questionnaires from parents and carers and 10 from staff.

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

- Whether all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, particularly in their language and communication skills.
- Whether the curriculum meets the needs of more-able children.
- What impact the changes in leadership, including those of the governing body, have had on the school's capacity to improve.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized nursery. The majority of children are White British and a small minority of children come from a wide range of different heritages. A small percentage of children are learning to speak English as an additional language, and most of these are in the early stages of language acquisition. The proportion of children identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average; a significant number have speech, language and communication difficulties. Almost all children attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The school has achieved the Basic Skills award. There have been a number of changes to the senior management team since the last inspection, including a deputy headteacher who joined the school in January 2011 and the current acting headteacher who joined the school in September 2011. There is a new Chair of the Governing Body and several new governors. Prior to the appointment of the acting headteacher, the governing body was considering federating with a local school. The headteacher of this school was seconded by the local authority as a temporary headteacher for two terms on a part-time basis. In the summer term, it was concluded that the federation would not be pursued. The school shares the same site as a children's centre which is led and managed by the same acting headteacher and governing body. The children's centre is subject to a separate inspection.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a good school where children achieve well and enjoy learning. The school has several strengths. Care, guidance and support are outstanding, ensuring that children feel secure and grow in self-esteem. The effectiveness of provision is strengthened by the good partnership the school has with external agencies and with the staff of the children's centre who contribute greatly to the children's development, learning and well-being. Parents and carers appreciate the work of the school and the many initiatives to help them to become more closely involved in their children's learning. This positive response is reflected in a parent's comment: 'I am really impressed with Goodway Nursery School. My daughter cannot wait to go to school. Every day she comes home talking about something different she has learnt. The staff are very helpful, they have a 100% focus on the children.'

Despite many recent changes, the acting headteacher and the deputy headteacher are strongly committed to making provision as good as possible for the children. The acting headteacher has secured the commitment of staff in her quest for sustained improvement, and staff say that they feel valued and supported by the leadership team. With the support of the deputy headteacher, she has been successful in keeping the school stable, building on existing strengths and swiftly putting in place key strategies for improvement, based on accurate and honest self-evaluation. However, although planning identifies the correct priorities, it does not always pinpoint clear and measurable success criteria to enable governors to monitor and evaluate the impact of their work. These strategies are beginning to have a positive effect, but the fact that it is too early to see sustained improvement and that the school is going through a period of transition means that there is currently satisfactory capacity to improve further. Assessments are used effectively to track pupils' progress and the achievement gap between all groups of learners is narrowing. The Chair of the Governing Body also has a clear vision for the school and is keenly aware of what needs to be done to improve. Following the decision not to federate with a local school, he is working hard to secure an imminent resolution for the appointment of a substantive headteacher before half term. Nevertheless, both new and experienced governors are not sufficiently informed about the work of the school and, consequently, are unable to challenge leaders effectively about the quality of their work.

Children achieve well given their varying starting points. They are eager, curious and enthusiastic to learn. They start school at around the age of three with skills which are below those typical for their age. They leave to start the Reception Year with

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knowledge, skills and understanding which are in line with national expectations. They are visible signs of the school's success in promoting a strong moral and social code, and children's cultural awareness is enhanced by celebrating a range of festivals. Nonetheless, there are few opportunities for them to experience first hand the diverse nature of society beyond the school. Children have a good understanding of why a healthy diet and exercise are important. They develop very positive attitudes to learning, form excellent relationships and behave well almost all of the time. Their confident and caring attitudes as well as their cooperative skills have a significant impact on their good achievement. Recent improvements to the leadership, and provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those children who need additional support in their language and communication skills, ensures that these children make good and often outstanding progress towards their individual targets.

Good teaching, a relevant curriculum and some exciting activities contribute well to children's good achievement. The outdoor area is used well as a learning resource. However, adults do not always use their observations to assess and record children's progress in order to better inform next steps in their learning. This means that some activities are not challenging enough for more-able children. There are also lost opportunities for staff to observe some highly effective practice within the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure consistently good teaching by:
 - strengthening the way staff use their observations in order to make more regular assessments of children's progress and use this information in planning the next steps in their learning
 - sharing existing good practice more effectively.

- Improve the effectiveness of the governing body by:
 - providing governors with detailed evaluative reports about all aspects of the school's work and involving them in a programme of regular visits so that they have sufficient information to evaluate the work of the school
 - including in the school's development plan measurable success criteria with clear links to children's outcomes so that governors can evaluate children's progress
 - ensuring governors play a more influential role in determining the strategic direction of the school
 - ensuring governors provide greater challenge and support in helping the school to tackle weaknesses and secure more rapid improvements.

- Implement plans to extend the school's promotion of community cohesion within and beyond the local area.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

2

New arrangements, where children are now part of a small group with their own key worker, have helped children to settle quickly into school and develop warm and caring relationships with each other and their key workers. Children work well in a wide range of activities; they are motivated and cooperative, and they concentrate well. Another recent change has been continual access to both classrooms and the outside learning areas where children already have the confidence to explore exciting and stimulating environments. Children show sheer pleasure in investigating their natural world; for example, one child was excited to have found berries in the grass. The sensitive intervention of the adult provided this child with a growing appreciation of the beauty of the natural world and a better understanding of animals and their habitats. Children are not afraid to take supported risks outdoors. They are fit and active, and enjoy every opportunity to move, dance, run and jump indoors and out. They took turns when completing an obstacle course and spontaneously clapped each other's achievements.

The school's strong emphasis on planning for children's personal development provides many opportunities for them to gain confidence and independence. They are well prepared for their time in the Reception Year. They have a good appreciation of other cultures through celebrating a range of festivals. Their celebrations include music, singing, dancing and reading multicultural books, such as *Handa's Surprise*. Children take great delight in carrying out responsibilities such as tidying up and taking the register to the school office. They listen carefully to each other's view about their learning, and are proud to help others through donating gifts to the school fetes and festivals. However, they do not have first-hand experiences of the lives of children in other local communities.

The school is fully inclusive. All staff receive specific training so that they are highly skilled in quickly identifying those children who may have learning difficulties. Intensive programmes with focused intervention strategies are monitored and evaluated well, ensuring that these children make at least good progress irrespective of their specific needs. For example, this commitment to ensure that all children's needs are fully met was observed in an adult-led session. Here, the children took turns in washing, feeding and changing a baby doll. One child, who speaks English as an additional language, was shown picture cards so that he was able to follow instructions and to participate fully. Opportunities to develop children's communication, language and literacy skills are capitalised on in both child-initiated and adult-led learning activities where adults model language well. Focused work, undertaken in very small groups enables children to receive intensive language support through fun activities where they take great pleasure in describing objects and what has 'magically' disappeared.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

2

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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	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	2
Children’s behaviour	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Children’s attendance ¹	2
The extent of children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Sessions are well organised and adults use a range of teaching methods successfully to involve children in their own learning. These methods involve one-to-one teaching, small-group work, independent play and exploration. Lessons are fun. Adults are adept at intervening in the children’s learning at key points to ask questions and extend the children’s thinking. They are also skilled in knowing when to stand back to enable the children to find things out for themselves. Teamwork among the staff is effective. They assess children’s development but they miss opportunities to make further skilful observations in order to identify more accurately what the next steps are in planning, especially in order to challenge more-able children still further. There are attractive displays and high-quality resources, which stimulate children’s interest and encourage them to explore and investigate. Information and communication technology is used effectively to enhance the children’s learning. Computer games are well chosen to reinforce basic skills and children select independently other equipment such as cameras and recording equipment. Children ask, ‘Can I take a picture of you?’ and enthusiastically take photographs of each other and adults. The children laugh with sheer delight at their efforts and the instant images.

The curriculum is firmly based on purposeful, practical activities, which take place indoors and in the excellent outdoor area, which provides rich experiences to develop all six areas of learning. Early reading, writing and mathematical skills are developed systematically and well. When the children are ready, they learn to link letters and sounds and to tackle simple calculations where appropriate. There is a good range of visits and visitors to enhance learning.

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

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Children’s personal development and well-being are good because their welfare needs are met exceptionally well. Staff liaise effectively with other specialists and make swift referrals following early identification of need. As a consequence, they plan high-quality individual support programmes through this multi-agency working approach for children and, where appropriate, their families. Individual educational plans are well focused, have clear targets and are reviewed regularly with the children and their parents. Although previously fragmented leadership means that the full impact of this high-quality provision has yet to be fully seen, children are now making good and often outstanding progress. Staff also provide regular workshops and sessions for parents and carers to keep them in touch with their children's work, as well as focused emotional well-being and nurturing groups.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets children’s needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The newly appointed acting headteacher, together with the deputy headteacher, is working closely with staff to sustain and build on the school’s existing strengths. The leadership of teaching and learning is good. In a very short space of time, there has been a substantial amount of lesson observation by the acting headteacher, whose monitoring of teaching and learning is accurate. However, it is too early to see the full impact of their actions on self-evaluation and school improvement. The Chair of the Governing Body is working closely with the local authority and school leaders to ensure that the role of the substantive headteacher is resolved quickly. He is also beginning to provide strategic direction and evaluate the school’s effectiveness. However, although the governing body discharges its statutory responsibilities, including ensuring that children are safeguarded, its ability to make a contribution to the work of the school has been limited, because it is not well informed about the work of the school. Despite being aware of the school’s strengths and areas for improvement, the governing body is not systematically involved in self-evaluation.

The school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination well. Senior leaders track the performance of groups and individuals and use this information to identify any potential gaps between different groups. This ensures that any emerging underachievement is identified and acted upon, as in the case of closing the gap between the attainment of children with communication and language difficulties and their peers. The school’s promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. The school is a very harmonious community but there are as yet no local and global links. The

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school understands that it needs to develop these and to integrate these into curricular planning.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

The percentage of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was lower than usual. A number of parents and carers met with inspectors, and others sent in further written comments. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and are very approving of the work of all staff. They are very positive about the work done so far by the new acting headteacher. They particularly commented on the warm, caring ethos and the stimulating learning opportunities. They feel their children are kept safe and are well prepared for the next stage of their learning. The inspection report reflects these opinions because it found that almost all areas of the school's work are good and that care, guidance and support are outstanding.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at iGoodway Nursery 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 21 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 84 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	86	3	14	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	14	67	4	19	1	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	71	5	24	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	14	67	6	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	13	62	7	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	67	6	29	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	52	5	24	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	15	71	4	19	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	62	4	19	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	71	4	19	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	15	71	5	24	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	18	86	3	14	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



13 October 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Goodway Nursery School, Birmingham, B44 8RL

Thank you for helping us to find things out about your nursery when we visited recently. I particularly liked having my photograph taken and making wriggly worms in the play dough with some of you. It was also lovely to see how well you can jump, run and balance in the exciting outdoor areas. We enjoyed talking to you and would like to share with you what we found out.

- Your nursery is good and your parents are very pleased with how well you are learning. They told us how much you enjoy being there.
- You all make good progress and you are learning a lot.
- The adults care for you exceptionally well and they give you lots of help when you need it.
- You all behave, learn and play together well.
- Your new headteacher and deputy headteacher are very keen to ensure that your nursery continues to get even better.

There are just a few things I have asked the nursery to do better. These are:

- for adults to make a note of how well you are doing and to use these notes to make sure that you make even better progress
- to provide you with more opportunities to make friends with children from other schools
- to make sure that the people who check what the leaders of your school do, are doing it well – these people are called governors and they need to be more involved in your school, so that they can see how well things are going on.

All of you can help your nursery too by making sure that you remember to try hard all the time and continue to enjoy everything you do.

Yours sincerely

Mary Hinds
Lead inspector

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