

Speedwell Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108900
Local Authority	Bristol, City of
Inspection number	377844
Inspection dates	September 2011
Reporting inspector	Jane Burchall HMI

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Cooling
Headteacher	Lindsey Fuller
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector. They observed a total of eight staff teaching children during child-initiated activities when children move freely between activities, both indoors and outdoors, as they choose. The inspectors met with the headteacher, the senior leadership team, staff, members of the governing body and external partners of the school. They also spoke with parents, carers and children during the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at children's work, records of their progress, the nursery school's development plan, evaluation document, and minutes of meetings. They read the 14 parental questionnaires that were returned together with staff questionnaires.

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

- How well the nursery school supports children who are at the early stages of acquiring English.
- How well the nursery school has tackled the downward trend in girls' progress in writing.
- Whether the creative approach to the curriculum meets the needs of all children.
- The impact of the recent changes in management.

Information about the school

Speedwell Nursery School offers part-time nursery education to children who live in the local area. Children join the nursery school at the beginning of the term following their third birthday; they move to primary school in the September following their fourth birthday. The nursery is of average size compared with schools offering similar provision. Since the last inspection, there have been changes to the senior leadership team including the appointment of a new headteacher and business manager at the beginning of September 2011. The senior leadership team also manages a children's centre which is an integral part of the school.

Children attending the nursery school come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and an increasing population speaks English as an additional language. A small number of children have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school is a Creative Partnerships 'School of Creativity' and holds both the Eco Schools Green Flag and the Healthy School awards.

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****2**

Main findings

Speedwell Nursery School is a good school that has many outstanding features. Children enjoy their time at nursery and are eager to attend. They settle to their learning quickly and happily because of the warm and caring approach of staff and the outstanding curriculum on offer. Children flow freely between the indoor and outdoor learning environments. They choose from a vast range of high-quality resources in order to follow their interests and lead their own learning. They are well supported by good teaching as staff help them to make choices and, through effective questioning, skilfully extend children's thoughts and ideas. Staff know the children well as they have systems in place to monitor children's progress and development. However, these systems are not sufficiently refined at present to show how securely each child is performing in comparison with age-related expectations. While some specific strategies are in place to support children who are in the early stages of learning English, staff do not always maximise opportunities which present themselves to model spoken English.

Children have a very strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They are able to describe what risks activities might present and offer sensible suggestions of how they can avoid harm. Their exemplary behaviour makes a significant contribution to them being able to keep themselves safe. Those who are new to the nursery very quickly develop an understanding of how to behave in a safe manner; they know how to handle tools such as scissors safely and that it is not safe to run indoors. They clearly understand the expectations of the nursery. On the very rare occasions that reminders are needed, children respond immediately to staff, who adopt a positive, problem-solving approach.

Children work extremely well together. Even the youngest children quickly learn to share and take turns as they use an 'egg-timer' to help them identify when it is someone else's turn on the computer. They work together to build towers and houses from large bricks, identifying ways to prevent them from toppling over. Children welcome their friends to join in their games and, supported by staff, quickly identify ways in which friends can be included. Through the school's strong 'eco' work, children understand how to care for the environment. They clearly have a voice in the nursery and their views are heard and respected. Children express themselves through creative media and staff seek their views on issues such as how the outside learning environment might be improved still further.

The quality of care, guidance and support offered to children and their families is

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exemplary. It is clearly evident that a strong, caring ethos lies at the heart of the provision. The nursery has developed outstanding partnerships to support children's learning and well-being and to ensure the children are safeguarded extremely well. They make excellent use of the links to outside professionals that exist with the co-located children's centre to support children and their families and ensure children's emotional good health. Well-thought-out transition and induction procedures, such as home visits and the opportunity to attend the 'Little Owls' group prior to starting nursery, result in children who settle quickly to nursery life and are ready and keen to learn. Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding. Parents and carers are fully included in the life of the nursery. They are provided with many opportunities to develop their knowledge of how their children learns and the confidence to extend this learning at home. The excellent relationships staff have with parents and carers are reflected in the overwhelmingly positive responses to the parental questionnaires received.

This nursery school shows good capacity to improve further. The speed with which the newly-developed senior leadership team has successfully identified the school's strengths and areas for development is commendable. Systems for self-evaluation are used to accurately identify the nursery's strengths and the areas which would benefit from improvement. Suitable plans have been created to address areas for development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Refine the assessment systems to enable staff to identify children's progress within each development matters age band more securely; so as to support the planning of provision more effectively to accelerate children's progress still further.
- Implement further strategies to support children who are learning English as an additional language so that they achieve as well as their peers.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

2

Children clearly enjoy their learning, demonstrated by their eagerness to attend. Parents and carers confirm this; one parental comment stated that their child 'cannot understand why they cannot come to school on Saturday and Sunday'. The majority of children join the nursery with skills that are below those which might typically be expected for their age, particularly in their communication and language. During their time at nursery, they make good progress so that by the time they enter school their skills are in line with those expected for their age. Overall, children achieve well. Staff place particular emphasis on providing children with a language-rich environment and effectively model language and, as a result, most children make particularly good progress in this aspect of their development. However, those who are learning English as an additional language make less progress than their peers. Children new to the setting are already becoming independent. For example, without any prompting or direction from staff, a child collected a step from the bathroom

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area to make her tall enough to reach into a sink in the playroom to wash her hands.

Children with special education needs and/or disabilities make equally good progress because staff identify their specific needs early on. They then implement appropriate strategies to support learning such as the 'listen and learn' programme to promote communication skills. Along with the headteacher, the new special educational needs coordinator is developing additional strategies to monitor children's progress even more closely so that children's progress may be accelerated still further.

Outcomes for being healthy are good. Children have access to regular fresh air as a result of effective free flow of play between the outdoor and indoor environment. They enjoy frequent physical exercise and they run, climb and use wheeled toys competently in the outdoor environment. Children are beginning to understand what constitutes a healthy diet. They prepare and eat fresh fruit for their snack and plant fruit and vegetables in the nursery allotment which they enjoy turning into something tasty to eat.

Children are developing appropriate skills to support them in the future. Boys and girls make good progress in their writing skills as they regularly make marks and write for a purpose, indoors and outdoors. Staff have been particularly successful in accelerating the progress of boys' writing so that by the time the boys enter school, their attainment in writing is in line with that of the girls. Most children attend nursery regularly; they show clear motivation to learn and engage effectively in new experiences. Children learn to recognise and celebrate differences. They express their thoughts and feelings effectively through the excellent range of creative opportunities on offer. They are learning that their behaviour can impact on others and appropriately show care and concern.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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	1
Children's behaviour	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2

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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economic well-being 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?

The quality of teaching is consistently good and has some very strong features. Staff are particularly skilled at providing step-by-step guidance to support children's learning. They instinctively know when to intervene in order to extend children's learning and do so sensitively and effectively. Staff skilfully support children to make choices and to take responsibility for their own learning. Good use of questioning helps children to recognise when they have learnt something new and staff reinforce this with lots of praise and encouragement. The exceptional curriculum provides children with a wealth of first-hand memorable experiences which promote high-quality learning and support both their academic and their wider personal development and well-being.

Staff have responded well to the needs of the increasing number of children who are new to learning English as an additional language. Strategies such as pictorial timelines and the use of 'signing' help children to understand the routines and expectations. Further strategies have been identified to develop provision further to support progress across all areas of learning, although these have yet to be implemented.

Staff regularly observe children in their play. They use the information gained to assess their progress and to identify the next steps in their learning. Systems to monitor children's progress over time are in place and leaders recognise that further refinement will support staff to ensure all children make the best progress possible. Children's learning and development are enhanced because of the very high priority given to their emotional well-being. Staff recognise that some families require extra support and work exceptionally closely with parents and carers, as well as outside agencies when required.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

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How effective are leadership and management?

The school is led by a newly-developed, enthusiastic and committed senior leadership team. Despite having only been in post for a few weeks, the headteacher has quickly identified an accurate picture of the effectiveness of the nursery school. Plans to drive improvement have already been developed and are beginning to be implemented. Systems to support the monitoring of teaching and learning are in place; the headteacher already has a precise view of its quality and where improvements need to be made. Staff and the senior leadership team are well supported by the governing body, who also have an accurate perception of the school. They are implementing a comprehensive induction for the newly-appointed headteacher and clear plans are in place to support her fully in her new role. Systems are being embedded for members of the governing body to become more involved in the monitoring of the nursery's outcomes and to ensure that the governors are in a stronger position to challenge the school more rigorously.

The nursery is a very inclusive setting. Staff work hard to promote a positive ethos where differences are recognised and celebrated. The nursery is a cohesive community and children are learning about their wider community. This is supported by the work undertaken with parents and carers, who share their experiences of their different ways of life and their upbringing.

Effective use is made of all resources. For example, staff work across the nursery and the children's centre. Leaders and managers work hard to secure additional funding to enhance the experiences offered to the children at the nursery, such as the 'schools of creativity' funding and funding to develop a breakfast club.

Children are very effectively safeguarded. Robust procedures are in place for ensuring that those who work with the children are suitable to do so. Comprehensive and effective policies and procedures are in place and staff are very clear on the steps they need to take should they have a concern about a child. Children who may be subject to a child protection plan are very well supported as staff gather a wealth of relevant information as early as possible and ensure they tailor the care they provide appropriately.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	2

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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	2
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	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are extremely supportive of the school. All of the written comments expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. Typical comments include, 'We think this is a very good school, the best in the area and are very pleased that our son goes here.' 'The children get a fantastic range of experiences, particularly creative and outdoor ones.' 'My daughter comes home after her time at Speedwell Nursery School excited, happy and full of stories to tell me. I would 100% recommend this nursery school to anybody.' 'At Speedwell there is a lovely inclusive and nurturing environment.' All respondents confirmed that their children enjoy school and they believe the school keeps their children safe. Inspectors endorse these and the other positive comments made.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Speedwell 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 14 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 80 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	9	64	4	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	6	43	6	43	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	7	50	5	36	1	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	6	43	7	50	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	8	57	6	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	5	36	9	64	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	7	50	7	50	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)	4	29	7	50	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	7	50	6	43	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	50	6	43	1	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	36	7	50	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	7	50	7	50	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	9	64	5	36	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.



29 September 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Speedwell Nursery School, Bristol BS5 7SY

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your nursery school. It was lovely to meet you all and to see the interesting things that you do when you are at nursery.

We think you come to a good nursery. We could see you have lots of fun and learn a lot because your teachers give you lovely toys and so many exciting things to do. We were very impressed with your excellent behaviour and how sensible you all are at keeping yourselves safe. You are all very kind to each other and are especially good at including your friends in your games.

We think your teachers look after you all really well and are good at helping you to learn. We have asked them to help you even more by watching you all very closely so that they know exactly what you need to learn next. We have also asked them to give a little bit more help to the children who are learning how to speak English. You can help your teachers by coming to nursery regularly and listening hard to what your teachers tell you.

We were pleased to see you all having such a lovely time. Thank you for sharing this with us.

Yours sincerely

Jane Burchall
Her Majesty's Inspector

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