

# Gracelands Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	103135
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	376830
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Georgina Beasley

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	53
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ashfaq Ashraf
<b>Headteacher</b>	Angela Mason
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 January 2009
<b>School address</b>	Grace Road Sparkbrook Birmingham B11 1ED
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<b>Age group</b>	3–4
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	10–11 May 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	376830



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Georgina Beasley

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with one day's notice. The inspector observed nine learning sessions taught by eight adults. Meetings were held with staff and representatives of the governing body. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the nursery's work, and looked at children's work, planning and assessment documents, monitoring reports, safeguarding procedures and the nursery's improvement plan. The inspector received and analysed 44 questionnaires from parents and carers and 11 from staff.

## Information about the school

Gracelands is a smaller-than-average nursery school. Nearly all children are from South Asian backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs supported by school action plus or with a statement is similar to that found nationally. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals is average. There are twice as many boys as girls this year.

Thirteen children attend nursery part-time and 40 full-time. Part-timers start nursery as soon as they are three and full-timers in the September following their third birthday. Children are admitted full-time according to strict local authority criteria. The nursery has the Success for Everyone award, a Silver Quality Mark, Healthy Schools status, a Basic Skills Award and an International Schools Award.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good nursery. It is not outstanding because children’s progress in their communication skills is not fast enough to enable more of them to reach age-related expectations by the end of the Nursery Year. Progress is good but the children’s level of language restricts their ability to talk about their learning and explain what is happening. Adults do not consistently ask questions that help children to extend their talk. The analysis of assessment information is not always precise enough. As a result, the school does not always pick up gaps in learning early enough in the year.
- Achievement is good. All children make good progress including boys and girls, more able children and disabled children and those who have special educational needs. Children make excellent progress in their personal, social and emotional development, and their physical and creative development.
- Teaching is good. Adults use assessment to plan learning activities that meet well children’s different academic and personal needs and interests. Children settle, learn the routines and follow instructions quickly because bilingual adults explain these to the children in their home language when they first start nursery.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Children have excellent attitudes and fully engage in learning. Adults monitor children’s well-being closely and detailed individual care plans support their emotional development highly effectively.
- Leadership and management are good. All staff, parents and carers, and members of the governing body share the nursery’s vision. Partnership with parents and carers is extremely positive. Performance is managed well. Staff attend relevant training to keep them up to date with current practice and requirements. As a result, the good quality curriculum and teaching reported at the last inspection have been sustained.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all adults consistently ask a range of questions that encourage children to give extended answers in English or their home language when talking about

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what they are doing, and when explaining what is happening in their learning and play.

- Analyse children's achievement in the different aspects within the three prime learning areas at least three time a year to identify gaps in learning early and to plan teaching and a curriculum that promote consistently outstanding progress.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

The inspection endorses the view of nearly every parent and carer who expressed an opinion that children make good progress. Children start nursery speaking very little. Most are talking confidently about their likes and dislikes by February half term. Children join in with favourite stories and, with support, are able to say what they like about them. Progress is not yet outstanding because most children do not have the level of language in English or their home language to talk about and explain their learning. This restricts their ability to show what they know and can do in a few areas of learning. Accurate assessments show that children's progress in communication, language and literacy, problem solving, reasoning and number and in knowledge and understanding of the world is good but only some achieve all of the age-related levels by the end of the Nursery Year in these areas of learning.

Children make excellent progress in their physical and creative development and in personal, social and emotional development. Nearly all are working within age-related levels in these areas of learning by the end of their year in nursery. All children including disabled children and those who have special educational needs have high levels of independence when choosing where and with what to learn and when caring for their personal needs. They are adventurous when playing on the climbing apparatus, confident in the knowledge that they will be safe and that someone is there to help them if they get stuck. Children choose from a range of materials to create pictures, puppets and models in response to stories or ideas of their own. They enjoy moving to music and adding sounds and actions.

Children enjoy learning, which is evident in how they engage fully in activities throughout the day. Activities meet the interests of boys and girls and give children good opportunities to explore both indoors and outside. As a result, children have good curiosity and interest. During the inspection, children were excited to find small creatures in different parts of the garden, eager to show adults and each other the spiders' webs, worms, flies and snails hiding in and under the plants. More-able children extend ideas independently, which others sometimes copy. For example, after making kites from wood and paper, a small group of children found that inflated balloons stayed in the air better. Soon more children could be seen exploring how balloons moved in the wind both holding onto the string and by letting them go.

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## Quality of teaching

The inspection endorses the view of nearly all parents and carers who consider that their children are well taught and that the nursery meets their particular needs well. Adults have high expectations for children's learning, well-being and personal development. They record children's learning and personal achievements consistently and use assessment information to plan relevant and well-matched activities for targeted children. As a result, support for disabled children and those who have special educational needs, and challenge to extend the learning of more-able children are effective in promoting good progress. Adults observe what children do and do not like and use the information to plan activities that meet the interests of every child. A range of toys and resources are accessible and so children choose how to extend their learning and play independently. Occasionally, adult-led activities give children too little opportunity to talk at length about their learning and show what they know and can do. During interactions with child-led learning, adults sometimes accept the children's first or one-word answers to their questions. As a result, the children's ability to use language to talk about and explain what they are doing or what is happening in their explorations is less well developed than their ability to ask for help and to hold conversations about their personal experiences.

Teaching supports the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. Children are taught how to care for the environment and living things extremely well. All children follow the rules to 'look not touch' and to leave small creatures where they are found when looking for them in the garden. A varied range of activities such as watching plants grow from seeds and how eggs hatch into caterpillars and then change into butterflies promote an interest in the wonder of nature. Well-planned celebrations of their own and other cultural and religious events support their excellent respect, for their age, of their own and others' beliefs and traditions.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Children's personal development is nurtured from the moment they start nursery. Every parent who returned a questionnaire expressed the view that their children feel safe and that behaviour is good. Nearly all feel that their children are well looked after. A few expressed concerns about bullying. The inspection found that incidents of unacceptable behaviour including bullying are extremely rare. Adults have very high expectations for children's behaviour and safety which they reinforce positively and consistently throughout the day. As a result, behaviour and personal development improve rapidly from the moment children start nursery and they soon learn to share, take turns, care for each other and behave in a safe way. Behaviour is consistently excellent. Children are extremely keen to learn new things. They get along well together, giving each other help such as holding a hoop while a friend climbs through, or holding the toy car still when someone is trying to fix on home-made number plates with sticky tape.

The nursery's care for children's well-being is extremely good. All staff follow the

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comprehensive safeguarding procedures diligently. Staff greet every parent and child at the door when they arrive every day, which makes everyone feel welcome. Similar checks at the end of nursery ensure children's safety. Children are confident to ask any adult for help knowing that anyone who works in the nursery can be trusted. They know that it is 'wrong to talk to strangers'. Attendance is excellent. Any absence is chased up immediately either by telephone or a visit to the home if there is no reply. Children and their parents and carers are proud to receive the good attendance awards during celebrations of personal achievements held every half term.

### **Leadership and management**

The headteacher has won commitment from all staff, parents and carers and members of the governing body to the nursery's vision. 'Children come first' is a sentiment echoed by all adults. The good promotion of equal opportunities and tackling of discrimination are recognised by the 'Success for Everyone' award. Adults discuss the learning of individual children during weekly meetings and subsequent support and interventions successfully accelerate progress. Individual care and learning plans for disabled children and those who have special educational needs are implemented consistently. Safeguarding procedures are comprehensive and meet requirements. They are effective in ensuring that all parents and carers feel that their children are safe.

The nursery has good capacity to improve. All staff and members of the governing body play a full role in evaluating the nursery's performance and so everyone is clear about what is going well and where improvement is needed. Staff training and professional development are focused and effective. Despite staff changes the quality of teaching and the curriculum continue to improve and promote children's good and sometimes excellent achievement. Issues identified in the previous inspection have been tackled effectively. New procedures for assessing children's learning and tracking progress in all areas of learning have been implemented which guide adults' daily planning well. The analysis of each area of learning is not always broken down by aspect and so is not precise enough to enable staff and the governing body to ask challenging questions earlier in the year about why some children are making faster progress in one aspect of learning than in another.

All parents and carers feel supported to help their children at home through workshops and individual discussions with staff. All but a few feel well informed and that the school responds to their concerns positively. Most parents and carers who spoke to the inspector were extremely pleased at their children's personal growth and in the range of vocabulary they use at home as a result of the numerous and varied activities, visits and visitors. The curriculum is good because it meets the learning needs of all children well. It is enriched extremely well by visits and visitors, which promotes the nursery's vision to 'open up the world to our children'. As a result, children's creative and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.

## 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 pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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 pupils. 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.



## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



14 May 2012

Dear Children

### **Inspection of Gracelands Nursery School, Birmingham B11 1ED**

Thank you for welcoming me to your nursery and for letting me join in with your learning and play. I particularly enjoyed looking for the small creatures in the garden and was impressed with how much care you took not to hurt them. Your nursery is good. You all make good progress and try your best to learn new things. I could see how much you enjoy coming to nursery by how you join in with all of the activities.

These are the best things that I found.

- The nursery organises lots of interesting activities for you to enjoy and which help you to be curious and to learn new things every day.
- You all behave extremely well which ensures you all get along well together and feel safe in nursery.
- All adults join in with your play and learning both inside and in the garden, which helps you to learn new words and to discover new things for yourselves.
- All adults know you very well and you know that they are there to help you when you get stuck.

I have asked the adults to do the following two things to help the nursery to get even better:

- to help you to talk about what you are doing in your play and learning, and about what is happening and what you have found out so that you can show what you know and understand
- to check carefully how well all of you are doing in all parts of each area of learning so that they can help you to do better even more quickly.

You can all help by continuing to do your best at everything and to keep trying new things, even when you find them hard at first. I hope you continue to enjoy nursery.

Yours sincerely

Georgina Beasley  
Lead inspector

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