

# Wharf Nursery School

Woolsack Way, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 2LF

## Inspection dates

20–21 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The majority of children achieve well and make at least good progress in their learning, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Children enjoy being at school. They are very safe and well looked after because expectations of behaviour are high and most activities and tasks engage their interest. As a result, behaviour is outstanding for their age and they attend regularly.
- The atmosphere in the nursery is happy and relaxed. The school promotes children's equality of opportunity well. It is an accepting and harmonious community where children are free from discrimination and harm.
- Outstanding care and support ensure children's needs are swiftly identified on entry to the Nursery. Well-tailored support is provided, especially for those who have additional needs, particularly in speech and language.
- Teaching and learning are consistently good and some teaching is outstanding. Staff have high expectations of children and go out of their way to make sure that activities and tasks are fun, interesting and demanding. The school's leadership has had a positive impact in improving teaching.
- The headteacher is a very effective leader and is very well supported by a strong team of staff. Since the last inspection, the leadership of the school and other staff have improved their record keeping to help children get the most out of their learning. The governing body has fully supported and kept an eye on developments.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Information about how well children are doing is not routinely analysed and used consistently to plan the next steps in their learning.
- A few tasks and activities are too easy for the most-able children.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector jointly observed with the headteacher four and a half hours of learning and development tasks and activities, including three group reading sessions. In addition, the inspector also viewed two sessions at the start of the school day which were attended by a large number of parents and carers who stayed to play with their children.
- Meetings were held with representatives from the governing body, the headteacher, teaching staff, support staff and the special needs coordinator. One telephone call was made to a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the seven responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and the views of 26 parents and carers who spoke to the inspector during the inspection. Views of children were informally gathered.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including information about how well children progressed, self-evaluation and school improvement documentation, planning, monitoring and assessment information, performance management documentation and school policies and records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance. The school's safeguarding procedures were also evaluated.

## Inspection team

Wendy Forbes, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Wharf Nursery School is much smaller than the average nursery school. It serves Godalming town, although some children attend from a much wider area.
- The nursery offers a 15-hour week as standard to 48 children. Most children attend either a morning or an afternoon session with ten currently attending all day.
- An above average proportion of the children are disabled or have special educational needs, mainly associated with speech and languages difficulties. There are seven children currently supported by early years action plus and one current statement of educational need.
- There are a very few children who speak English as an additional language.
- Since the last inspection, the nursery has moved from temporary buildings to a new purpose-built school including on-site catering facilities and training room, which opened officially in May 2011.
- The school shares premises and works in partnership with the Sure Start Children's Centre they were not part of the inspection.

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

- Extend the learning of all children by routinely analysing progress data and using it to plan next steps in their development.
- Ensure that tasks and activities consistently challenge children, especially those who are most able.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Nursery with skills and knowledge broadly in line with those expected for their age in all areas of learning, except speech and language, which is much lower.
- The majority of children make at least good and sometimes outstanding progress in their learning this is because teaching is consistently good and learning tasks and activities are planned well to meet the needs of most children.
- Staff make a special effort to get to know each individual child and their parents and carers so that they can help each child to enjoy learning and achieve well. Parents and carers, appreciate this, especially the home visits and the daily opportunities to talk about their individual children with staff.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs make equally good progress as their peers, especially in speech and language. This is because of the exceptional care and support provided in their learning and the school's special focus on early language development.
- All of the children accept and respect each other and they play and work cooperatively together. Boys and girls make equally good progress because the range of activities and adult interactions support the learning of most groups of children successfully.
- The few children who speak English as an additional language progress well. This is because staff provide well-tailored additional individual support and activities to enhance their early language development.
- The school's improved assessment and tracking systems help staff to identify any gaps in children's learning. However, this information is not routinely analysed in order to consistently plan next steps for learning. A few activities and tasks do not always extend learning, particularly of the more able children.
- The school is especially effective at promoting children's personal, social and emotional development. Children settle quickly at the start of the day and immediately find friends and activities to enjoy, sometimes without direct adult help.
- Staff interventions are extremely effective in developing children's speaking and listening skills to a high level.
- Despite a relatively small outdoor area, children have a good range of learning opportunities that develop all areas of learning; from riding bikes, to more-imaginative activities such as story maps, hunting for mini-beasts and investigating floating and sinking. Children develop finer skills through activities such as cutting, drawing, painting and using a hammer and nails on cork boards.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- The overall quality of teaching is consistently good. Sometimes teaching is outstanding.
- The staff make a strong, knowledgeable and effective team. This has a clear impact on the excellent relationship between the children and adults, and the effectiveness with which children learn.
- The teachers, nursery nurses and learning support assistants ensure that there is a good range of adult-led and child-initiated experiences, so that children develop their independence as well as learning new skills and knowledge at a good rate.
- The exploration of how wet and dry sand combines or which containers could be

filled with the most water was a focus of much interest. Children enthusiastically talked about how they were 'experimenting'. Building sand castles and filling containers offered excellent opportunities for children to explore and observe.

- Children are supported well in developing the use of computers. Giggles of delight could be heard as children experimented by clicking their mouse on 'Tizzy the clown' and counting the apples that he 'plopped' into a basket. Such worthwhile activities have a positive impact on children's very effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Staff place importance on encouraging independence and individual responsibility. They make resources accessible to children so they are able to make decisions about what equipment to use, and what area of the nursery, indoors or out, that they want to experience.
- Staff work closely together to plan and prepare each session so that all children benefit from good quality learning opportunities. In addition, small group sessions promote children's early reading skills well. One group of children demonstrated their enthusiasm for reading as they sang their way boisterously through the stories of *'Arabella Miller's caterpillar'*, *'Incy, Wincy Spider'* and *'The Wheels on the Bus'*.
- Staff interventions are thoughtful and effective in developing children's learning and thinking skills. For example, in one session an adult's questions helped a child with additional needs to learn how to count and order the number of candles on a Play-Doh birthday cake the child was making.
- Staff observations of learning inform 'learning journey' books, which contain a wide range of assessments and observations as well as samples of work.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Behaviour is outstanding. Children make good and sometimes excellent progress in their personal and moral development because of the consistent emphasis on these aspects in all activities.
- Learning in all areas is enhanced because of the children's excellent attitudes towards school.
- Without removing the excitement of exploring new learning, especially physically, staff are vigilant in observing and tracking children's activities to eliminate unnecessary risks.
- Children are very happy and are relaxed in the nursery. They are encouraged to be polite and good manners and courtesy are expectations. Children quickly adapt to the presence of a new adult and very proudly share their work and play. One boy was very keen to share his prowess as a garage mechanic, mending school bikes with a complex range of play tools.
- Lunchtime is a particularly happy social time. While lunch was being served children kept a watchful eye on the inspector, making sure that she waited patiently to be served and that she said 'please' and 'thank you' once provided with a meal.
- Children's behaviour contributes extremely well to their learning. There are no incidents or records of any bullying of any type, or unsafe behaviour. The vast majority of parents and carers say their children feel safe and are well behaved at school. Children told the inspector that the outstanding behaviour seen on inspection was typical. One child said, 'We are never naughty because there is always something good to do.'
- Attendance is improving significantly. Parents and carers are clearly aware of the importance of regular attendance, even for children of this early age.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The very effective headteacher and her staff have been successful in maintaining and building on the good outcomes and provision noted at the time of the last inspection, including through changes to the staffing.
- The school's very positive ethos is shared by all staff, who are ambitious for the school.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this good school.
- Recording and monitoring systems of children's progress have been developed since the last inspection. Assessment is used to track individual children's attainment on entry and their progress and final attainment when leaving the school. However, this information about how well children are doing is not always routinely analysed or used to amend activities so that learning can be extended, particularly for those more able.
- Arrangements for children starting school are very effective and all children quickly settle. Home visits help staff to quickly become familiar with children, their likes and dislikes, pre-school learning and their family circumstances.
- Staff regularly take part in training to extend their knowledge and skills. Management of performance is given high priority by the headteacher and the governing body. The work and development of all staff is effectively monitored through regular observations and a planned programme of improvement is embraced by the staff. This has led to improvements in teaching.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and its improvement planning has an appropriate focus on the important issues for development.
- The school promotes children's equality of opportunity well. The nursery is a tolerant and harmonious community where children are free from discrimination and harm.
- The well-planned curriculum supports the school's ethos of developing children's independence. All areas of learning are covered with a rich and wide range of activities, experiences and visits out of school.
- Parents and carers appreciate the school's efforts to ensure that they are actively involved in supporting their children. They had much praise for the opportunities to stay and play each morning as well as the associated family learning programmes provided.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - has a good understanding of the school's performance
  - ensures that its training supports its understanding of the work of the school and that governors are actively involved in the life of the school providing support and constructive challenge through regular visits and the work of committees
  - ensures that throughout all school activities safety has a high priority. There are rigorous procedures for safeguarding and risk assessment, which meet statutory requirements, including careful checks on adults and a planned approach to managing the safety of pupils.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupil's needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupil's needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124913
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	402299

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	56
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lucy Barnes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mandy Heslop
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14–15 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01483 415220
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