

The Gainsborough Nursery School

North Marsh Road, Gainsborough, DN21 2RR

Inspection dates 18–19 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The school provides a very safe and caring environment where children thrive in their learning and have fun.
- Staff take exceptionally good care of the children and their families.
- All children, including disabled children and those who have special educational needs, make outstanding progress; children who attend for three or more terms make the most rapid gains because they have more time to consolidate their basic skills.
- The teaching is outstanding, with very well planned activities. Children explore and extend their ideas confidently through the many high quality opportunities they have to talk to staff and to try things independently.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary; they settle quickly, listen attentively and work with each other extremely well.
- Leadership and management are of very high quality, shown by sustained improvements in the quality of teaching and children's achievement since the last inspection.
- Partnerships between home and school are very good, with parents kept very well informed about their child's achievement; the vast majority of parents ensure that their children attend regularly.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons, six of which were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made visits to lessons to talk to children about their learning, observe them reading and talk to them about school.
- Meetings were held with two governors, senior and middle managers and a representative from the local authority.
- In presenting the inspection findings, as there were no responses on 'Parent View' (the on-line questionnaire for parents), the inspector took account of the comments parents made during the inspection and the school's own parent questionnaires from July 2012.
- The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's data on children's progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Rajinder Harrison, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized nursery school. It has 42 places for children in each of the morning or afternoon sessions and 10 flexible places for children who stay for lunch or attend for full days. The proportion of children who attend all day is low.
- Children start at the age of three and, depending on their date of birth, have up to five terms in the nursery before starting full time education.
- Almost all children are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of children identified as disabled or with special educational needs is above average. The proportions of children supported at school action and school action plus are about the national average. The proportion with a statement of special educational need is below the national average.
- The school has had considerable staff changes since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Consider what further support can be given to those children who have the shortest time in school, and their families, so that they consolidate their basic skills and make rapid gains in all areas of their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of children is outstanding

- On entry to the school, children's skills and abilities are much lower than is typically found for children aged three, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development and their communication, language and literacy skills.
- Reflecting the outstanding teaching, children grow and flourish and achieve high outcomes. Children's overall progress is exceptional, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development.
- By the time children leave, most achieve levels that are at least in line with expectations. A high proportion exceeds these levels and of these a significant number achieve levels that are normally expected of children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children who attend for three or more terms make the most rapid gains because they have longer time to develop and extend their skills.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs receive the support they need to progress as well as their classmates. Specialist support is identified where children have specific needs, for example in their speech and language development, and this ensures that these children also achieve successfully.
- Children learn quickly by listening to songs and stories every day. They have excellent opportunities to talk so that they have a firm grasp of how to communicate effectively. Children explore letters and sounds very effectively through rhyming games and other activities. Many know the letters in their own and other people's names. They sound out letters to read simple words accurately and enjoy many good opportunities to read and write independently.
- Through the rich and varied activities staff organise, children make excellent gains in their number skills, their creative and physical development and their knowledge and understanding generally. For example, children were fascinated by watching balls roll down guttering and explained very confidently why bigger balls 'jammed it all up'.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Lessons are consistently good and the majority are outstanding. Particularly effective are the extensive opportunities children have to plan their independent work time. In these sessions, staff observe very closely what children can do and use this information to plan subsequent activities that will stretch the children further. Individual planning is a key strength; the observations staff and parents record in children's 'special books' show that high quality assessments have had a marked impact on children's overall achievement.
- Other significant features of outstanding lessons include probing questions that encourage children to think about their learning and share ideas; and timely interventions from staff that extend children's understanding extremely effectively.
- Staff guide children unobtrusively so that children gain confidence when attempting something new or challenging. Teachers maintain a lively, enthusiastic pace that children pick up on quickly.
- Teachers make learning fun through stimulating questioning and discussion and set children tasks that make them think and apply previous learning. For example, children listened to

the story 'We're going on a Bear Hunt' and excitedly announced the next hazard that faced them.

- Teachers check that children understand and are clear about what they have to do and give them the support they need to succeed. Those that find it difficult to grasp information immediately are praised for trying so that they are more confident next time.
- Teamwork is of exceptionally high quality. Teachers deploy teaching assistants extremely effectively to support targeted pupils; particularly good is the one-to-one support that helps individual children gain confidence quickly when they first start school.
- Lessons are very calm and orderly. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and consistent guidance ensures children know what is acceptable practice. In occasional lessons, a few children, generally those who have just started school, struggle to maintain concentration; support staff intervene appropriately to move children on to other activities so learning is not disrupted for others.

The behaviour and safety of children are outstanding

- Children's behaviour is exceptionally good because, from the outset, staff set high standards that children adopt quickly. Particularly valuable is the integration of older children with those who are new to school. Newcomers follow the excellent example set by those who know the routines so that 'settling-in' issues are minimised effectively.
- The school is well organised. Parents and children are very clear about daily routines and everyone works hard to ensure children's safety and well-being. Parents say that their children are very happy at school and that they are very well looked after. Accidents are very rare and when these occur parents are kept fully informed. Staff are extremely well trained in handling any emergencies that arise so that children are kept very safe.
- Children are very kind to others. They share equipment willingly, for example pushing each other up and down slopes on bicycles sensibly and letting others join in their imaginative play as 'super heroes' or running away from the 'big, bad wolf'.
- No-one is made to feel left out; children are shown high respect and they replicate this in the way they treat each other. Incidents of bullying are not evident in school.
- Children settle very quickly when they first join the school because they have excellent opportunities to visit before they start.
- The attendance of the vast majority of children is very good. Children enjoy being at school and parents recognise how much their children benefit in their learning and achievement by being there.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has high ambitions for all children and their families and is highly effective in her leadership and management. Her calm, composed but rigorous approach to school improvement has been instrumental in leading developments since the previous inspection.
- The governing body, staff, volunteers and others involved in the school's work share the headteacher's high aspirations and work effectively with her to improve provision.
- Outcomes for children have improved since the previous inspection and teaching is now outstanding. This demonstrates the excellent skills leaders have to secure further

improvement.

- The school's evaluation of its performance is wholly accurate because monitoring procedures are robust.
 - Children's progress is tracked very closely. The school is quick to identify the additional needs of individual children. Those whose circumstances have made them vulnerable are supported extremely well through excellent links with other agencies and schools. Parents receive very effective guidance as to how to support their children's learning at home.
 - Leaders and managers have very high expectations of staff. Performance management procedures are rigorous; leaders ensure that staff have every opportunity to develop their skills and improve their performance. The headteacher leads by example and ensures that staff have a secure understanding of what constitutes outstanding practice.
 - While very few parents contributed their views during the inspection, those who did were extremely positive about the school and said that they would recommend it to others.
 - The curriculum meets children's needs exceptionally well and provision for literacy ensures that most children achieve the levels expected for their age by the time they leave the school. Children have excellent opportunities to develop their skills and apply their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in independent work time.
 - Curriculum enrichment is outstanding. Visitors, including those from different cultural backgrounds and diverse professions, introduce children to a world beyond school and walks in the locality help children explore their community and recognise their place in it.
 - Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the curriculum as a whole but particularly through the many excellent opportunities children have to learn from others and explore for themselves.
 - The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements.
 - Very good links with other schools help leaders review their practices and enhance school improvement.
 - The local authority celebrates the school's outstanding performance and uses it to share good practice.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - helps to promote a culture of high expectations of everyone involved with the school and is vigilant in its role as 'critical friend'
 - monitors the school's performance rigorously, particularly the monitoring of teaching and learning and checking the accuracy of the school's self evaluation
 - has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and checks that improvement priorities, such as the re-organisation of staffing, successfully secure high outcomes for all children.
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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 pupils' 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 pupils' 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

Unique reference number	126563
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	402406

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	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	74
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tori Morris
Headteacher	Joanne Noble
Date of previous school inspection	13 October 2009
Telephone number	01427 811610
Fax number	01427 811610
Email address	jo.noble@gainsborough-nur.lincs.sch.uk

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