

Bentilee Nursery School

Dawlish Drive, Bentilee, Stoke-on-Trent, ST2 0HW

Inspection dates 15–16 November 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.

- Children have fun and learn at a rapid pace in this very exciting and creative setting. They make excellent progress in all their learning but especially in their speaking, listening, physical and social development.
- Children love learning and really enjoy their time in nursery. They settle very quickly into the day-to-day routines and know, for example, the importance of listening to what their teachers and friends have to say.
- The children make friends easily and enjoy playing together. Their behaviour is exemplary because they never have time to be bored. Checks and policies are fully in place to ensure the children are safe at all times.
- All adults have an excellent understanding of how well each child is learning and of how they can learn even more.
- The nursery has exemplary links with parents who unanimously agree, 'staff are very friendly and always listen to any concerns we may have'. Parents of children who have special education needs were full of praise for the high quality support they receive.
- Leaders and managers have continued to extend the outstanding judgements received at their last two inspections. They have successfully begun to share their exceptional skills and outstanding practice with other schools and settings.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector spent eight hours observing children learning and playing, including eight short sessions, when children spent time with their key person. Three of these sessions were joint observations with the headteacher.
- She held meetings with senior leaders, staff, members of the governing body and a group of parents.
- She checked school documents relating to safeguarding, how well children are doing in their work and the ways in which the school checks on children's learning.
- She took into account of the school's most recent survey completed by 37 parents. No parents responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Clare Henderson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average sized nursery.
- Children aged three and four years old attend full-time.
- One third of the children have special educational needs.
- Almost all the children are of White British heritage.
- A few of the children are from minority ethnic groups and speak English as an additional language.
- The nursery shares a building with the Tree House Children’s Centre and a private provider, Tiny Toez. These provisions are subject to separate inspections. Reports about their quality can be found on the Ofsted website.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to lead and deliver high quality early years training and practice not only in this nursery but to other schools and settings in the local area.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children start the nursery with skills that are well below those typically expected for their age. Inspection findings fully agree with parents that, whilst in the nursery, the children do exceptionally well in their learning. As a result, they leave with skills that are typically expected for their age.
- Strong home school partnerships begin long before the children start school with a range of home and school visits which continue through into their Reception Year. This ensures that the children settle happily into school routines.
- A high focus on learning nursery rhymes, exploring sound and music through action songs and playing instruments rapidly extends children's knowledge of patterns and an early recognition of words and numbers.
- Through visits from storytellers, to which parents are invited, and opportunities to take books home, children's interest in reading is accelerated rapidly. Parents say these opportunities are very informative and help them when they read with their children at home.
- Children extend their physical and social development very well, especially in the outdoor area. They are very confident in, for example, climbing, riding bikes or using the slides.
- They show impressive levels of concentration; this was seen as they iced and decorated cakes. They were extremely proud of their creations and eager to show them to their parents at the end of the day. Boys and girls spend much time engaged in the early writing activities. Some children are already making an effort to write their own names.
- Children develop an excellent understanding of the world in which they live as, for example, they explored the places in the world where they might see crocodiles and, with adult support, looked in travel brochures for the chosen places.
- Children with special educational needs and those at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language do as equally well in their learning as their classmates. This is because adults provide excellent opportunities, through individual and group activities for children to practise their speaking and listening skills and for all to develop an early understanding of how letters and sounds help them to read and write.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Parents are very pleased with the quality of teaching their children receive. Comments such as 'every day my child is learning new things' is typical of their views.
- Children are confident and secure because they know they have a special person who is always there for them. Parents are full of praise for this support, 'I like being able to go inside and talk about the work and learning my child has done'. Each key person has a detailed knowledge of the children in their group and through skilful questioning and challenging activities they enable the children to move forward in their thinking and reasoning skills at a rapid pace.
- Listening to stories or taking part in group times are examples of the excellent opportunities children are given to share their thoughts and feelings. As a result, they listen attentively and are very enthusiastic and keen to join in with their ideas. An example of one of these moments was observed in one group when the children talked confidently about what was in a shiny red bag. 'It's a spider' led into a discussion about how many legs a spider has.
- Adults provide an excellent range of resources for children to enjoy. The outdoor area is superb, children independently choose from a wide variety of play areas such as the garden, the adventure areas or the quiet areas to explore, discover and extend their physical development and understanding and knowledge of the world in which they live.
- High quality records of what children have learned give staff and their parents an excellent picture of how well each child is learning; this, together with weekly homework tasks, is a strong

part of the excellent two-way dialogue between home and school.

- Adults have developed an excellent programme whereby they encourage parents to share in their children's learning. A wide range of courses for parents, arranged by the highly skilled parent link worker, extends their own skills and provides, for many, a route into education and a deeper understanding of how young children learn.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Children really enjoy their time at nursery and this is reflected in their high levels of attendance. School administration staff are particularly vigilant in phoning home on a daily basis to check the reasons for absence.
- Relationships are excellent. Children benefit enormously from the high-quality adult support and, as a result, spend their time productively in learning.
- Children show impressive levels of independence when choosing their own activities. They are equally skilled working in groups or alone. One child spent a considerable time drawing a picture of herself and then used a pen to 'write her name' in the space she had left. All the while, she was totally absorbed in learning.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. Basic rules of safety and high expectations of behaviour are in place. These are fully understood and followed by all the children. Children are quick to include one another in games and to follow the example of adults in treating each other kindly. Children learn and play together successfully in pairs and groups. They sustain interest well, for example, in making and serving meals in the home corner, or when buttering their crackers at the snack table.
- The children eagerly welcome being special helpers who set the tables at lunchtime. They quickly adopt the high expectations that staff set for behaviour. Plenty of rewards and praise celebrate children's achievements.
- Children feel very safe in the nursery and know the day-to-day routines they are expected to follow, especially in terms of health, hygiene and playing. Excellent links with fire and police services within the community ensure children learn what they need to do to stay safe.
- Boys and girls have equal access to all the available activities and, because of high levels of support and regard for each child's well-being, bullying or discrimination of any form are not tolerated.
- Parents raised no concerns about their child's safety. 'It's nice to walk away in the morning knowing my child is safe and enjoying school. He even wants to come at the weekends' is typical of their views.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Inspirational leadership and a shared commitment from all adults to make every day a happy, learning experience are fully evident. Central to the school's success is strong teamwork. The views of all staff are fully welcomed and included in school improvement and the professional development of all staff is a high priority.
- Checks made by leaders, governors, parents and staff of teaching and learning are thorough and result in a school improvement plan that considers the views of all and is focused on improving outcomes for young children.
- The curriculum, especially the use of the outdoor area, makes a significant contribution to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In this setting, children learn to take turns, to share with others and to think about their feelings. For example, the children reflected on how teddy was feeling when he did not have any friends and how he felt once his friends were found. 'He's happy now,' the children exclaimed.
- The school promotes excellent relationships and ensures all children benefit equally from high-

quality experiences whilst ensuring all safeguarding requirements are met. Very strong partnerships with parents are seen as a vital part of children's learning and development. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of all aspects of the school's work.

- Very strong links with the children's centre, the day care nursery, local schools and outside agencies are used very well to support children's learning and development, especially for those with special educational needs. The local authority uses the nursery as a model of exceptional practice, and the staff are beginning to share their expertise with other Early Years settings.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has continued to improve since the previous inspection, especially in being more fully involved in checking the quality of teaching and children's learning. They provide outstanding support and challenge to senior leaders, based on a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need improvement. Checks of how successful staff are in their work take place very regularly. Targets set to check staff performance are clearly based on improving children's learning and development.

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	123970
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	402214

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	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann Harvey
Headteacher	Elizabeth Massey
Date of previous school inspection	14 July 2010
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