

# Gannev's Meadow Early Years Centre

New Hey Road, Woodchurch, Wirral, Merseyside, CH49 8HB

**Inspection dates** 4–5 December 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
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 thrive in this welcoming Nursery school, because they are known and valued as individuals. They are comfortable and secure and ready to enjoy early learning.
- The partnership between parents and the school is very strong. Parents feel very well informed about how their children are doing. They say that the Nursery also helps them to help their children learn at home.
- Excellent teaching by a highly skilled team of professionals is enabling children to make outstanding progress from their starting points, especially in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Staff keep a very careful check on every child's progress; because of this, the activities that they plan are very well matched to the children's needs.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs make excellent progress because they are very well supported by staff who have an exceptional range of specialist skills.
- Children greatly enjoy coming to the Nursery. Activities are stimulating and fun and there are lots of interesting opportunities for them to learn through playing and exploring together, in and out of doors.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. They are pleased with their achievements and happy to talk to visitors about themselves and all that they have done and learned in the Nursery.
- Leaders, managers and governors all share a determination to ensure that every child does as well as they possibly can. They succeed in preparing the children extremely well for the next stage in their education.
- Leaders plan improvements to teaching very well. They are currently working to ensure that the targets for children's progress are more sharply defined, so that they have an even better measure of how well children are doing.
- As part of a well established and popular Early Years Centre, the Nursery is able to offer children and families high-quality extended care and a range of additional services on site. This contributes significantly to the Nursery's outstanding overall effectiveness.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed a wide range of nursery activities over the two inspection days, including observations of children in activities they had chosen themselves, in activities led by adults and in small-group sessions led by staff members.
- She spent time with individual children, looking at and discussing their 'learning journey' books, which are records of their achievements during their time in the nursery.
- Meetings and ongoing discussions were held with the headteacher and staff members. The inspector met with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector reviewed information from eight responses to the on-line parent questionnaire (Parent View) and from 23 letters received from parents. She also met with a group of parents and carers, including grandparents, to hear their views about the school.
- The inspector took into account the views that staff expressed in the questionnaires they returned.
- The inspector observed the nursery school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan, documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour and safety, and data on children's current progress.

## Inspection team

Diane Auton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The Nursery school is part of a children's centre which is led and managed by the headteacher and the governing body. The inspection report for the children's centre is available on the Ofsted website.
- The school provides part-time places for morning and afternoon sessions and split week places over two and a half days.
- Parents can choose from a range of attendance options within this core offer. Some families also buy in additional sessions and this, too, is organised on a flexible basis in response to families' individual requirements. In practice, this means that each day there is a group of children who stay for lunch and attend both the morning and the afternoon session; the size of the group and the children in it can vary from day-to-day.
- Extended care at the beginning and end of the school day is provided by the children's centre.
- The proportion of children supported at Early Years Action and at Early Years Action Plus is broadly average; there are no children on roll, currently, with a statement of special educational needs.
- Most children are from White British backgrounds and all speak English as their home language.

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

- Set out explicit end-of-year progress targets in the school development plan, so that, when leaders are making their evaluations of the school's effectiveness, they can measure children's progress against the targets and gain a more sharply defined picture of how well the school is doing.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children start in the Nursery with a range of developing skills. Most are at an earlier stage of development than would be expected for their age; some, including those who have disabilities or special educational needs, are at very early stages in their development.
- Children make rapid progress in all of the areas of learning. By the time they leave, their skills are much closer to expected levels for their age group, they have gained in confidence and they have developed extremely positive attitudes to learning.
- Children with special educational needs make excellent progress in relation to their abilities and starting points. The support they receive in nursery often helps to narrow or even, sometimes, to close the gaps between their achievement and that of the other children.
- Children do extremely well in developing their personal and social skills. Staff encourage them to try to do things for themselves. They respond well to this, tidying up at the end of sessions, learning to fasten up their coats and put on their wellingtons to go outside. They play together very well. They are learning to share and to take turns, waiting patiently until their turn comes around.
- Children's early writing skills develop well. Staff understand how to support this, first providing children with opportunities to develop their skills in large-scale activities, including finger-painting, to help them progress to forming letters accurately on paper with a pencil. Children are keen to 'have a go' at writing their names and are learning to write the letters for the sounds at the start of words.
- Because they have regular opportunities to sing together, children recognise rhyme and know and enjoy many nursery rhymes and songs. They enjoy playing with musical instruments in the classrooms and out of doors.
- The outdoor area is an interesting and exciting place for learning and fun. The children especially love the orchard garden. They were eager to talk about collecting the apples and bringing them in to make apple crumble, as this had clearly been a memorable experience for them. They enjoy digging and planting activities and know that the bulbs and vegetables they planted need water and sunshine to help them grow.
- Children are extremely interested in books. They know that some books tell stories and other books give information about things they want to know about. They make sure that their parents pick up home learning packs for them, so that they can enjoy more stories and games at home as well as at the Nursery. They look forward to their regular visits to the local library that shares the same site.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The staff team represents a wealth of experience and expertise. Staff know the children and their families very well. Parents hold them in high regard and appreciate the care and dedication they bring to their roles.
- In their letters to the inspector, parents spoke of the great variety of activities that are available in the classrooms. A typical comment was, 'It's never boring for the children. The staff are always changing the activities, so my child can't wait in the mornings to see what the new things are!'
- In all of their letters and in the meeting with the inspector, parents said how happy and, often, how amazed they were with the progress the children were making as a result of 'wonderful' teaching.
- Teachers plan the sessions carefully. They review activities regularly to ensure that they reflect children's interests and that they support learning and progress well.

- Adults help the children to extend their thinking and develop their play. They manage this particularly well in the activities the children choose for themselves, helping the children through questions or prompts, rather than interrupting or over-directing.
- Staff keep a regular check on children's progress. The children's learning journey books give a clear and detailed account of each child's progress across the areas of learning. They include photographs, examples of counting and number work and early writing. Examples of children's comments about their learning show their developing language skills.
- Parents contribute their comments and observations to the books. They meet regularly with their child's key worker to review updates to them. Letters to the inspector often touched on this, saying that the learning journeys are 'so special' and how pleased parents are to be so well informed.
- Small-group teaching is provided for children of all abilities. This ensures that everyone receives the support they need to develop their speaking and listening skills and their early literacy skills, including getting to know about letters and the sounds they make. These regular sessions are helping the children to gain confidence and make rapid progress.
- Staff work closely with other professionals, including the educational psychologist, the speech therapist and the physiotherapy service, to ensure excellent support for children who have special educational needs. This is a key factor in the excellent progress made by this group of children in improving their social, communication and physical skills.

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

- All of the children, including those with special educational needs, are absorbed in their play and in enjoying the activities provided for them. Because they are so busy and involved, there are very few squabbles.
- Children chat together happily about what they are doing. They sit at the computer with a friend and enjoy using a software programme together. They take part in role-play activities together, acting out favourite stories. Children are learning to concentrate for extended periods on an activity and to complete a task before moving on to something else.
- Everyone knows and understands the school's routines. Children respond promptly to signals at the end of sessions and know when it is time to tidy up or move to the carpet for whole-class sessions with the teacher. They have trusting relationships with the staff and know that they will be looked after if they are unwell or upset.
- Children are kind to each other and welcoming and friendly with visitors. They have a good, age-appropriate understanding of what are the right and the wrong things to do.
- Staff are very positive role models and everyone is treated with care and respect in the Nursery.
- Children attend regularly and their punctuality is very good.
- Induction arrangements for children at the start of the year are carefully planned and extremely supportive. The school has close links with all of the nearby primary schools and works with them to ensure that children make a smooth transition to the Reception classes.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The headteacher is an outstanding leader. She has a detailed overview of all aspects of the centre, including the Nursery school, and leads a complex organisation with great skill and care. She has ensured that high standards have been sustained successfully in the Nursery over the period since the last inspection.
- She is supported by highly skilled senior staff, by effective practitioners at all levels and by extremely knowledgeable and well-informed governors. There is a powerful drive to ensure that children are given the best possible start to their education.

- Arrangements to check how well staff are performing are firmly linked to ensuring excellent teaching and positive outcomes for children's learning and progress. An extensive programme of staff training and professional development ensures that staff skills are continually being updated and improved and that teaching practice never 'stands still'.
- Leaders have a detailed picture of the progress being made by every child during the year, as a result of regular checks and careful record keeping.
- The school development plan identifies well chosen actions to help children to learn and progress as well as possible. The plan sets out broad targets for children's progress during the year and leaders are currently adjusting these to make them more detailed, to give a more precise measure of how well the children are doing.
- The school's partnership with parents is a major strength. Parents are given every opportunity to be actively involved in their children's learning. They are overwhelmingly positive about the school's effectiveness.
- The children benefit greatly from the centre's partnerships with a wide range of agencies across the community, including health and social services and other local schools.
- The local authority provides 'light touch' support for this successful Nursery school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors' detailed knowledge of children's achievement and of the quality of teaching and learning enables them to play an active part in evaluating the school's work. Governors contribute effectively to managing staff performance, ensuring everyone is held to account for children's progress. Governors have taken difficult decisions arising from reductions in the school's budget this year; in doing so, they have tried very hard to ensure that school funding is spent to achieve the best possible support for children's learning. Governors carry out their statutory duties effectively, ensuring that procedures to safeguard children's welfare are managed well and reviewed regularly. They ensure that equal opportunities are promoted vigorously and that all children have every opportunity to enjoy all of the activities in school and there is no discrimination. Governors attend regular training events and often join in staff training activities.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104986
<b>Local authority</b>	Wirral
<b>Inspection number</b>	400747

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>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	79
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alison Cretney
<b>Headteacher</b>	Caroline Roberts
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 677 9255
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