

# Greenhall Nursery

Second Avenue, Holmcroft, Stafford, ST16 1PS

**Inspection dates** 16–17 January 2013

<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 make exceptionally good progress. They develop their skills at a very fast rate.
- Teaching is outstanding. Each child is treated as a unique individual.
- Children's physical, personal and communication development are extremely well promoted.
- Planning for learning is very thorough although it does not fully reflect recent changes to the government's guidance. Not enough use is made of assessment towards the Early Learning Goals in planning teaching and learning for more-able children.
- Teachers, teaching assistants, nursing and therapy staff all work very well together. Helping the children is at the heart of their work.
- Children love school and their behaviour is excellent.
- Children are very happy and enjoy learning and playing together.
- Children have outstanding relationships with adults. They trust them completely for all their needs.
- The school's outreach work for children with physical difficulties in other schools is greatly valued.
- The work of the leaders and governing body strongly supports the excellent teaching and learning.
- The school has excellent partnerships with parents and carers. They rely on the school for support and advice.
- The staff are proud of the school and work hard to provide the very best for the children.
- Greenhall provides excellent help for very young children and their families in their School for Parents and Play and Stay sessions.
- The leaders and governing body have made sure that the school has remained outstanding and improved further. However, some of their routine work is rather last minute.
- The school's leaders and governing body have a very clear view of how it should develop. They are working hard to implement developments despite uncertainties about the budget, how children will be admitted and the impact of changes in the local authority.

## Information about this inspection

- Six lessons taught by four teachers, one higher level teaching assistant and a senior teaching assistant were observed.
- The inspector observed lunchtime in all three classes, and made several short, informal observations of free play in the central hall.
- Meetings took place with class teachers, the headteacher, the deputy head teacher (also the teacher in charge of the outreach service) and five members of the governing body. Two of these were parent governors who also talked about their experiences as parents of children attending the school. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector examined a range of documents. These included those relating to children's progress, how children are kept safe, how teaching is planned, governance, and how teachers are supported and trained.
- Seven responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents and carers, were taken into account.
- The views of 19 respondents to the staff inspection questionnaire were also considered.

## Inspection team

Judith Charlesworth, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Greenhall nursery provides for boys and girls with physical disabilities. Most have one or more additional difficulties, including speech and language delay, moderate, severe or profound learning difficulties, communication and interaction difficulties, and sensory impairment. A few children have life-limiting conditions.
- Some children have a clear diagnosis of their difficulties, such as cerebral palsy. Others are placed at the school for an assessment of their needs and future education.
- Almost all children join the school on an assessment placement, leading to a statement of special educational needs. Currently, 23 children have a statement.
- The school uses the specialist Conductive Education approach for children with physical disabilities.
- Children are placed in mixed-age classes according to their assessed needs.
- Children are admitted from a wide catchment area in Staffordshire.
- The number of children moving to mainstream school varies from year to year. Last year, two thirds of the children moved from Greenhall to mainstream school, and one third moved to special educational provision.
- The school has a second function as a Key Learning Centre. Along with three other special schools for children with physical disabilities in Staffordshire, it provides support and training for pupils of nursery and primary school age who have physical disabilities, their parents, and the mainstream schools they attend.
- Greenhall runs two, weekly, 'School for Parents' groups which provide Conductive Education for babies and very young children, together with their parents. It also runs a weekly Play and Stay group for children who have developed independent mobility but need additional support. This group is open to the children's siblings and other children who do not have disabilities or special educational needs.

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

- The school's leaders and governing body should review, monitor and evaluate policies, practices and systems more evenly throughout the school year so that evaluations are thorough and not rushed.
- The school should ensure that:
  - all documentation and practice fully reflect the revised Early Years Foundation Stage welfare, learning and development requirements
  - more use is made of assessment towards the Early Learning Goals in planning teaching and learning for the higher attaining children.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children's skills on entry vary widely. For example, some children with very severe physical disabilities have nearly age-appropriate skills in some areas, while others have profound difficulties in all areas. Others have independent mobility, but very reduced concentration and communication skills. Overall, though, children's development on entry to Greenhall is delayed due to their physical disabilities.
- Children's skills are carefully assessed when they first start at Greenhall. Many children are already known to the staff due to their attendance at the School for Parents and Play and Stay groups. This assessment, together with information from other professionals, forms the baseline from which their progress is re-assessed every six months. It is a very well established system, and provides regular, reliable information.
- The baseline assessment helps staff develop targets for children. These are outlined for staff and parents in an 'individual programme of study' and more simply for children in an 'individual education plan'. Records of progress towards these targets are kept, along with evidence to support the staff's judgements. This information is used to update the six-monthly assessments. However, assessment of children's progress towards the national Early Learning Goals is not used as effectively to plan for learning and development, particularly of the more-able children.
- Children make exceptional progress. Boys and girls of all abilities, from all backgrounds, including being looked after by the local authority, make similar progress. Over the past three years, each individual child has made at least good progress, including those with degenerative conditions. Nearly all have made outstanding progress. In many instances, children 'take off', and gain skills at up to eight times the usual rate.
- Children develop their skills across all the required areas of learning. Many learn to regulate their own movements, for example, demonstrating 'bicycling' and 'butterfly knees' as soon as they are mentioned in Conductive Education. Some children learn to sit without help, and to walk alone or with the use of specialised equipment. Other children learn to tolerate movement, which keeps them flexible and limits deterioration in their physical skills.
- Children learn to communicate more effectively. For some, this is verbally, where they learn to speak in full sentences, use their imagination and make jokes. Other children communicate through the use of simple signing and symbol recognition. Less-able children use facial expression and sounds. More-able children learn to read simple words, such as the days of the week and months of the year. They recognise numbers up to 10, make repeating patterns with miniature 'fruit', and use number words in everyday play.
- Children's personal, social and emotional development progresses rapidly due to outstanding teaching and the interesting range of activities provided. It is further supported by the work of other professionals and the staff's strong, positive relationships with the children and their parents and carers. Children develop high levels of concentration and perseverance, often in the face of real physical challenges. They follow instructions and respond to questioning with enthusiasm.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The children's excellent achievement is underpinned by outstanding teaching by both teachers

and teaching assistants. Classroom staff work exceptionally well together, and with medical and therapy staff, to meet the physical, educational and care needs of each child. Relationships between all adults and the children are outstanding which helps staff to interpret children's responses quickly.

- Teaching always takes account of children's physical, communication, and personal, social and emotional development. Staff successfully help less-able children to understand the purpose and value of communication by repeating the sounds that children make back to them.
- Lunchtimes are an important time for teaching and learning. Children make impressive gains in learning to feed themselves with individual attention and the use of mirrors placed in front of them, so they can check on how they are doing. Children who do not have food by mouth join their class at lunch time to take part in the social event, saying grace, and the hygiene routines.
- The play sessions in the hall are extremely well resourced with interesting, exciting equipment and activities. They provide very well for children to choose their own activities. Excellent support from staff ensures that no child is ever left doing nothing. For example, on one very brief observation, children were seen to practise walking, play happily with each other on a simple giant spinning disc, experiment with textured surfaces fixed to the wall and play independently with cars on a 'road rug'.
- The Conductive Education sessions follow a very clear, highly structured routine which is repeated many times over the term. They help children learn to regulate their own movements, anticipate activities and tasks, and develop communication through song and rhyme. The children really enjoy their success which supports their spiritual development very effectively.
- Staff use each child's programme of study to provide them with suitable activities, resources and appropriate teaching approaches. Those working with more-able children, for example, use humour and 'deliberate mistakes' to interest and amuse the children and assess whether they have learned, as the children are very quick to correct them. Those working with children with interaction and communication difficulties offer a very clear, structured approach which helps the children to stay calm and concentrate.
- Children are given constant feedback and clear praise to encourage learning. Teaching assistants use their initiative to support individuals or small groups to concentrate and learn, within whole class, small group and independent play sessions. Very occasionally, in whole class teaching, the lack of duplicated resources slows the pace of learning as children have to wait their turn for too long.
- Time is given for children to reflect on whether they have succeeded. They are often asked to say so by giving a 'thumbs up', which is a difficult skill for many. Musical cues are often used to signal a particular activity which helps children to anticipate what is coming so they can organise their thoughts and movements. Computer technology is used well by both staff and children. More-able children very much enjoy using the large computerised whiteboard on their own.

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

- The children's behaviour and attitudes to learning are excellent. They are keen to join in all the activities provided and are almost always happy and cheerful throughout lessons. More-able children with severe physical disabilities try exceptionally hard to carry out physical tasks. On one occasion, for example, children concentrated hard and managed to coordinate their arms

and hands several times to pick up small items.

- Children have outstanding, trusting relationships with staff, on whom they depend for all their needs. Many children also have very good relationships with one another, for example, playing together companionably with toys and equipment on the floor, around a table or in their wheelchairs. Lessons and playtimes have a warm, enjoyable and busy atmosphere.
- Very occasionally, children's responses to one another are anti-social. This does not take the form of bullying. However, records show that individuals sometimes show their frustrations or inability to communicate their needs by, for example, pushing another child. When this happens, staff teach the child that the behaviour is inappropriate, which supports their personal development very well.
- The school emphasises hygiene and safety, and children learn good habits. For example, they routinely clean their hands on freshly prepared flannels before cooking activities, and learn to use their walking and mobility support equipment safely.
- Parents and carers say that their children enjoy school and are keen to attend. They are happy with behaviour and safety at Greenhall. Children's absence from school is almost always due to illness and hospital admissions, both of which are common. Parents and carers who bring their children to school are punctual. They are warmly welcomed and frequently use the opportunity for informal discussions with staff. Local authority transport arrangements, too, generally get children to school on time.

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

- The school's leaders and staff are ambitious for children's futures. They make sure that all children are included and are given equal opportunities for learning, development and care regardless of their ability, disability, gender or background.
- Leaders and managers accurately identify the school's strengths and areas for development. This and the long-term vision for the school's future are used well to plan developments.
- Long-term school development is currently affected by a number of uncertainties. These include imminent changes to funding, admissions and the reorganisation of local authority services. Dealing with this is taking up much of the governing body and senior leaders' time. The local authority says that it intends to 'work in partnership with Greenhall to manage change together'.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this outstanding school. The school benefits from services such as governor training and the Early Years service. Engagement with most of these is the school's own choice. Greenhall shares its expertise widely. The headteacher sits on many authority-wide bodies to contribute to decision-making and to extend understanding about physical disability.
- Greenhall's outreach support is highly regarded by the local authority and receiving schools. Apart from the benefits to the recipients, the service helps smooth the transition of children from Greenhall into mainstream schools.
- The school has excellent partnerships with parents and carers, who are kept fully up to date with their children's progress. They rely on the school as a source of guidance, support and multi-disciplinary expertise. The School for Parents and Play and Stay groups give parents and carers

confidence in the school from the time their children are very young – sometimes just a few months old.

- The outstanding quality of teaching has been maintained since the previous inspection. Less effective teaching is quickly spotted and dealt with, with the full involvement of the governing body. The school has not yet adopted the government's new arrangements for helping teachers to improve their work, but intends to do so next month.
  - Staff are well trained and very good arrangements are made for them to further their qualifications. For example, a teaching assistant have gained higher level teaching assistant status and a member of the teaching team is currently working towards the National Professional Qualification for Headship.
  - The learning activities provided meet the requirements for the age-group as well as the children's wide-ranging needs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well, and their spiritual and social development is particularly good.
  - Children have free, safe access to play areas and outdoor learning spaces, including a sensory garden. Fund-raising events over the past years have greatly improved the outdoor areas and provided many items of equipment and indoor resources, including an updated sensory room. The classroom and play activities provided have a very good balance between those directed by staff and those chosen by the children themselves.
  - Each teacher has responsibility for planning for teaching and learning, and for the assessment of children in their class. In practice, though, the small size of the school and the many opportunities for mixed group teaching and free play mean that staff collaborate closely. However, staff have interpreted the new national requirements for the age group slightly differently, and paperwork does not always fully reflect the new arrangements and terminology.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Members of the governing body are experienced, committed and well-trained. Parents, carers and grandparents are well represented and bring helpful, personal viewpoints. Members are knowledgeable about the children's achievement and the quality of teaching and how these are evaluated. Decisions on the use of the budget are carefully debated, and always have the needs of the children at heart. The outcomes of teachers' annual observations and target-setting are clearly reported to the governing body. They contribute well to decisions about expenditure on training and pay increases.
    - The governing body understands the school's strengths and areas for development. Much time in the past year has been spent on trying to establish clarity over admissions and planning how to cope with the changes expected to its budget, for example by increasing fundraising and public awareness activities. This has meant that some routine matters are not always done at the planned time of the year, and the leaders and managers are rushed to get them completed properly.
-

## 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>	124524
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	403560

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 special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2-5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	33
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mark Pursehouse
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Milligan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 May 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01785 246159
<b>Fax number</b>	01785 215490
<b>Email address</b>	office@greenhall.staffs.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

