

# Westfield Nursery School

Westfield Road, Dunstable, LU6 1DL

## Inspection dates

16-17 January 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 enjoy all the wonderful activities which are offered by Westfield Nursery because staff plan sessions and use equipment extremely well.
- Children's achievement and progress are outstanding due to the fact that staff use the right balance of practical activities led by adults, or chosen by children, to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Children behave exceptionally well because staff manage them very skilfully and ensure they are safe at all times.
- The headteacher encourages all staff to work together as an exceptionally dedicated team who care for children and their families very successfully.
- The school has improved a lot since its last inspection because many staff have improved their practice by completing a range of courses. This means that they are even better at helping children to build their speaking skills confidently.
- Teaching is outstanding because staff have an excellent understanding of how best young children learn and ensure they make rapid progress.
- Leaders, managers and governors work extremely successfully to make sure that children make as much progress as possible. They regularly watch to see how effectively staff work with children.
- Parents and carers are very pleased with how well the school assists their children to learn to do things for themselves and concentrate on their work.
- All parents said they would recommend the Nursery. One parent summed up their thoughts when they said, 'My child loves Nursery, he gets upset when it's the weekend and he's not going. All the staff are very approachable.'
- Although children's skills are typical of those expected for their age when they leave, the school is working to further strengthen their understanding and knowledge by developing the ways staff talk to children about what they have done well and could do next to improve.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half a day's notice and took place over two days.
- The inspector observed nine lessons or part lessons and nine members of staff were observed. Five were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, the joint Chairs of the Governing Body, school staff, children and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed children's behaviour and scrutinised the school's safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector took account of the 55 responses to the school's questionnaire which were collected in June 2012 and 15 responses to the online 'Parent View' survey carried out during the inspection. The questionnaires of 12 staff were taken in account.
- The inspector observed the work of the school and looked at documentation including teachers' planning, the school development plan, tracking documentation of children's progress in all the areas of learning, performance management documentation and minutes from meetings held by the governing body.

## Inspection team

Jackie Cousins, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is larger than most nursery schools.
- Children are taught in a shared open-plan area with three small classrooms off the main space.
- Most children attend for five part-time sessions each week. No children attend this school or other schools for part of the week.
- The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average.
- No children are known to be eligible for the pupil premium because they are not of the statutory age to receive it.
- The proportion of children who need extra help (either at early years action, early years action plus, or who are undergoing assessment for a statement of special educational needs) is above average.
- Most children are from White British backgrounds and a few are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A few children are learning to speak English as an additional language.
- The school offers early education for two-year-olds for 12 hours a week within the same building as the Nursery. This provision is subject to separate inspection arrangements.

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

- Raise children's skills, knowledge and understanding to even higher levels by ensuring all staff:
  - explain in detail to children what they have done well
  - discuss more effectively with children how they can improve their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Most children join the Nursery with a broad range of knowledge, skills and abilities but a very significant proportion are behind in their communication and mathematical development. Due to the excellent experiences provided, they make outstanding progress and by the time they transfer to Reception classes they reach levels that are typical of those expected for their age in all areas of learning.
- Children who are learning to speak English as an additional language also make excellent progress. The staff work together very successfully to ensure teaching has the greatest impact on these children's language development, and they meet each morning to plan and consider how to make things even better for individuals and all children.
- Boys and girls do equally well in developing their key language, social, physical, English and mathematical skills because the teaching is so in tune with them as individuals. For instance, more-able children learned to read very effectively in one session observed because big and small books were used so thoughtfully and they were taught what sound each letter represented at a rate that suited them.
- Children, including those from minority ethnic groups, learn to write and make marks very productively because lots of opportunities are set up for them. For instance, they learn to write lists of what they want to order in a cafe because well-planned practical activities and staff support result in children learning extremely effectively.
- Teachers and support staff encourage children to speak plainly. This means that children make excellent progress in learning to talk. Many children whose speech was not well developed when they started at the Nursery, catch up rapidly and leave with speaking skills, which are as well developed as other children of their age.
- Children learn to count very effectively because they regularly gather together in small groups and take part in mathematical activities. They learn about the world productively. This was seen when they found out about the shape of space rockets and painted a model rocket with colours they had mixed for themselves.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs receive excellent support which is adapted exactly to their requirements. This ensures that they make the same outstanding progress as other children. There is no variation in the progress of children known to be eligible for free school meals and the others, because the provision works similarly well for all of them.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding and has many strengths which include the highly effective way staff organise sessions so that children, including those who need extra help, can learn very successfully. Staff think exceptionally carefully about the steps children need to take to learn new skills. For example, children learn to use scissors very effectively because staff explain the process in small steps and encourage them to practise cutting a wide variety of materials.
- Staff are highly skilled at working with children to give them confidence to find things out for themselves and extend their learning through a rich variety of questions. They build on

children's knowledge and skills so that they develop minds which are imaginative and look for a variety of ways to solve a problem.

- Children enthusiastically take part in adult-led sessions because staff use equipment very imaginatively. For example, children keenly acted out and said key phrases from the story of 'The Three Little Pigs' because staff encouraged them to use puppets extremely successfully to aid their recall. Children who are learning to speak English as an additional language build excellent language skills as a result of the highly expert support from staff.
- All the teachers and support staff work together productively to provide very exciting experiences for the children that enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For instance, children learnt about Diwali because staff thought up exceptionally creative activities for children to take part in such as cooking exciting dishes and visitors shared their knowledge about this important Hindu celebration with them very effectively.
- Staff create an extremely purposeful atmosphere in the Nursery. This means that there are wonderful opportunities for children to learn both within the classrooms and outside areas. For example, children learnt about what ice does when it is melted or was hammered. This experience was exceptionally successful in encouraging children to describe what they saw and felt because questioning was used so skilfully by staff to stimulate the children's ideas and deepen their understanding.
- All staff are involved in checking children's learning and making notes about what they are able to do. They keep detailed records and chart progress in specific journals. These show a very clear picture of each individual child's progress over their time in the Nursery. Occasionally, staff miss opportunities to discuss with children exactly what they have learnt and what they could do next time to make their work even better.

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

- Children come to the Nursery regularly and very keenly start activities as soon as they arrive. They are clear about everyday routines and understand about sharing equipment. Children have many opportunities to make friends. For example, they learn extremely successfully to play games together and help each other to put on dressing-up clothes.
- Children soon become independent learners because they have easy access to a wide range of fascinating materials and staff explain to children how they can do things for themselves. The children learn to concentrate for considerable amounts of time and persevere when activities are challenging because staff encourage these skills very successfully. Children learnt for themselves about many parts of the world excellently when they studied different peoples' clothes and sung songs from different countries.
- Children learn to take small risks and work out how to keep themselves and others safe. For example, during one observation they learned how to use equipment very safely when they built a staircase and path using bricks effectively with out hurting anyone else.
- The school handles behavioural incidents with children, including those who need extra help outstandingly carefully and works thoughtfully with children and their families when these very rare episodes occur. This ensures children understand rapidly why particular behaviours are not acceptable. Staff are highly skilled at managing children and take an exceptionally positive attitude to helping them make the best choices.

**The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The leadership of the headteacher and others at all levels is outstandingly effective and the school has exceptionally good systems for deciding what works well and what is less useful in its drive for improvement.
- Staff say that they are 'very proud to work as part of a very hard working team'. Teachers gather and use many ideas extremely effectively after visiting other successful schools abroad and in Great Britain to observe high-quality learning. Their desire to search out the best to maximise children's achievements underpins the outstanding progress children make in all areas of learning.
- The use of training to improve teaching and the quality of education provided is a considerable strength, for instance, staff share and discuss best practice after filming each other working with children. Many staff have successfully gained extra qualifications as a result of encouragement from senior leaders.
- Staff have a great enthusiasm and commitment to the education and welfare of the children in the Nursery. The school works very productively with other professionals and so children often benefit from specialists' knowledge such as a speech therapist.
- The school's development plan is well written and it contains valuable ideas about ways to improve the school. Senior leaders and governors keep a very close eye on whether the Nursery is likely to meet its targets and are continually challenging themselves to do even better.
- The school works in partnership with parents and carers exceptionally well and supports them to be very successfully involved in their children's development. The staff use children's records as a tool to discuss with parents and carers how well each child is doing at least once a term. The headteacher and staff keep a very close check on how much progress children are making.
- Many activities are planned which promote high levels of achievement and determination among the children. For example, children learn to use the most up-to-date information and communication technology and have used this to create very imaginative pictures of astronauts.
- Children from different backgrounds have plenty of opportunities to play productively together. Many projects allow them to learn very successfully about different people's cultures in this country and abroad.
- In recent years the local authority has had limited involvement with the school because of its high-level effectiveness.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body fulfils its duties exceedingly well. It makes sure that the school is a safe place and that staff are suitably checked and trained in child protection matters. The joint Chairs of the Governing Body play a very significant role in making decisions. Governors complete training courses which enable them to hold the school to account outstandingly well. They check the quality of teaching by asking questions about data which shows how much progress is made by different groups of children. Governors have an excellent level of knowledge of school data and a full understanding of the school's effectiveness. They make

sure that decisions about how money is used are intelligent ones that give best value. The governors decide whether teachers and staff should be rewarded with salary increases and review targets for the headteacher.

## 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>	109422
<b>Local authority</b>	Central Bedfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	401056

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>	97
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Maxine Boyle and Zoe Arnold
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ann Simpkins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 December 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 608650
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