

Kingswood Nursery School

Briar Road, Watford, WD25 0DX

Inspection dates

7–8 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children make good progress and achieve well in all areas of learning, but do especially well in developing their personal, social and emotional skills.
- Children are well prepared for the next stage in their education because of the good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching they receive.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary; they love coming to school as they thoroughly enjoy a wide range of exciting well-planned activities.
- Parents and carers are extremely positive about the good quality education provided in a safe and secure environment.
- Children learn in a nurturing environment where they receive excellent care. A very welcoming approach makes sure that they settle quickly into school life.
- Children with additional needs are given very good support, so they make the same good progress as others.
- The headteacher leads a strong staff team, all of whom have a very good understanding of how children learn, very effectively.
- Since the last inspection the governing body, working with the school staff, has taken effective action to ensure teaching and children's achievement are now good.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Children are not making outstanding progress in all areas of learning because there is not enough outstanding teaching.
- Sometimes staff miss opportunities to challenge and encourage children to think even harder for themselves.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed a wide range of activities in the nursery over the two inspection days, including activities children had chosen themselves, others led by adults, and small-group sessions led by staff members.
- The inspector 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.
- The inspector spent time with individual children, looking at and talking to them about the records of their achievements noted in the 'learning journey' books.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, staff, three governors and several parents. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took into account the views expressed in the 12 completed staff questionnaires, and the 55 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Susan Thomas-Pounce, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average nursery school.
- It provides morning and afternoon sessions, and admits children following their third birthday. Parents and carers can choose from these sessions.
- The school has a pre-school attached which is managed by the governing body. Nursery children can access additional hours from the pre-school to add to their 15 hour entitlement. This provision is inspected and reported on separately.
- The large majority of children are White British backgrounds with a small number of pupils from minority backgrounds. This varies from year to year.
- The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs supported through early years action is average. The proportion supported at early years action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- The school does not receive additional funding from the government through the pupil premium because nursery children are not funded in this way.
- No children are educated in alternative provision away from the school site.
- There have been several changes in leadership since the previous inspection. The Chair of the Governing Body and the headteacher are new, though the acting headteacher at the time of the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching and further improve children's progress, by:
 - making the best possible use of questions and discussions to encourage children, especially those who are most able, to think more deeply and articulate their thoughts about their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- From generally low starting points, children make good overall progress and leave the nursery with the knowledge and skills expected for their age. Because of the high-quality relationships the school has built between adults, children and parents, children make outstanding progress in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Staff encourage children to be independent and to try things out for themselves. Children are able to get themselves ready when they go to learn outdoors, and are very good at tidying up without being asked. The lunch club provides additional opportunities for children to develop their personal and social skills. They sit together happily talking about their interests and activities. They are especially good at sharing and taking turns.
- Every day children have many opportunities to try out a variety of exciting activities, both indoors and outside. Well-planned sessions where children work in small groups help to develop specific skills. The display chart of the 'mind-map' work they did on 'the cave' was a useful reminder of what they had thought about together when they were planning their learning for the week.
- Children can borrow books and are increasingly confident in using letters and sounds. They are starting to recognise the sounds and letters at the start of words. A good example of this was seen when children excitedly put their 'word stew' pictures of words beginning with the letter 'R' into the pot, stirring the soup as they chanted the rhymes they made up using the new words.
- Stories are used regularly to support the development of early reading skills. Mark-making and writing activities are encouraged both indoors and outdoors, and children make good use of these with some able to write their names on their work. The 'wow word' board is used well by staff and children alike to talk about and learn new words they can use in their work.
- Staff take every opportunity to reinforce the development of mathematics, whether it be counting how many pieces of paper they will need for the painting group, or to work out how many children are sitting in the circle.
- Children like exploring the sandpit and the role-play area. They have plenty of opportunities to raise their activity levels by cycling at pace around their pretend roadways and in the daily 'phizzy fit' sessions. After they had been jumping up and down with great glee, one child said, 'My heart is sounding like a disco.'
- Staff have a wide range of experience and expertise. They know the children and their families very well. Parents think highly of them and appreciate the care they bring to their roles. Staff assess children's personal and academic needs well, and plan effectively to meet them.
- Some children, including those who are disabled and those who have special educational needs, are at a very early stage of learning. Because their needs are clearly identified they receive sensitive support at all times, and this enables them to achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Children's achievement has risen since the previous inspection. Key workers know their children

very well and detailed records of children's learning and progress are used to plan what the children are expected to learn next. These record the learning journeys children make during their time in the nursery and include photographs and examples of early writing, mathematical development, 'magic moments' from home learning as well as comments on attendance and next steps in learning. Parents and children are very proud of these records.

- Parents who talked with the inspector spoke about how much their children had learned in such a short time in the nursery. This is the result of consistently good teaching, with some examples of outstanding practice. All who work in the nursery value each child as an individual and they make sure that there is a warm and happy atmosphere at all times.
- Children are given every opportunity to develop their independence as well as learning new skills because of the good range of activities provided by a strong and effective team. All children are taught in small groups with their key carer every day.
- The relationships between adults and children are excellent. Resources are made accessible to children so they can decide not only what equipment they will use, but also what area of the nursery they will use for their learning. The learning environment is bright and cheerful with many examples of the work the children have done across all areas of learning.
- Staff ask thoughtful questions to develop children's learning and thinking skills. However, although their questions increasingly make children think hard about what they are learning, they are not always probing enough to stretch the most able children. In discussions, for example, children are not encouraged enough to explain their thoughts, and so deepen their thinking.
- Children with very specific needs receive one-to-one support and learn to enjoy working and playing together. Staff work well with a wide range of external professionals to ensure the additional needs of these children are met. Consequently they make rapid progress in their personal development and the same good academic progress as everyone else.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Children play extremely well together and show very good attitudes to learning. Whether they are working with an adult or by themselves, they sustain their interest for long periods of time because they are motivated to learn.
- Children are kind to each other, welcoming and friendly with visitors. They have a good understanding, appropriate to their age, of the right and the wrong things to do. Staff, governors, and parents and carers feel that the children behave extremely well. No child has been excluded on the grounds of bullying or racist incidents in recent years.
- Staff are very good role models and everybody is treated with the greatest respect. Everyone knows and understands the school's routines and policies, and the procedures for promoting high standards of behaviour are applied consistently well. Children are exceptionally cooperative with adults. 'Tidy up' sessions run like clockwork in a calm and happy environment.
- Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. It is supported by a strong culture of care and ensuring that all children have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- Parents and carers are especially pleased with the induction arrangements for children at the start of the year. They say they are extremely supportive, and give them every confidence in the

workings of the school.

- The school has close links with the nearby infant school, and works with them to ensure a smooth transition for children as they move up into the Reception classes. A joint attendance project has proved very successful.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides strong and ambitious leadership. She is supported very well by the senior teacher, skilled governors and a highly committed staff team. All share a vision and a determination to give each and every child the best possible start.
- Staff have an energetic drive for continuous improvement, and the school has successfully addressed the areas for action that were identified at its last inspection. The very effective leadership of the headteacher has improved the school considerably since then.
- The school has an accurate awareness of its strengths and minor weaknesses, which is underpinned by regular monitoring of the quality of teaching and the progress made by children. The findings from these reviews are used to set clear targets for improvement. All staff have their performance checked on an annual basis. This is closely linked to the progress children are making, as are teachers' pay rises. An extensive programme of training ensures that staff skills are continually updated and improved.
- The way activities are taught is well planned across the areas of learning, and enriched by a wide range of extra experiences. These are relevant to the children's ages and interests, and promote good overall progress.
- The school's partnership with parents and carers is a significant strength. They are extremely positive about the way the school works, and how it helps them to understand their children's learning. They overwhelmingly agreed that they would recommend the school to others.
- The local authority provides regular advice and support that has helped the school to improve rapidly and become good.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a very good understanding of how well the school is doing, as well as how it can get better. They carry out checks regularly, and use the resulting information to make sure that money is spent wisely so that children achieve well in a safe and secure environment. Governors carry out their statutory duties well, ensuring that the good procedures to safeguard children's welfare are managed well and reviewed regularly. Clear procedures make sure that any judgement on staff performance is closely linked to the overall effectiveness of the school. They have taken full advantage of training to develop their roles. Since the previous inspection several new members have been appointed and there is a wide range of experience and expertise amongst governors, including experience of nursery education.

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	117076
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	405683

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	57
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Melanie Harvey
Headteacher	Bernice Jackson
Date of previous school inspection	23 March 2011
Telephone number	01923 672531
Fax number	01923 675231
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