

# Bilston Nursery School Children's Centre

Wolverhampton Street, Bilston, WV14 0LT

**Inspection dates** 14–15 February 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.

- Bilston Nursery is a special place to learn. Children greatly enjoy all the exciting and stimulating activities.
- Adults and children have excellent relationships. This enables learning to take place naturally as staff know the children very well as individuals.
- The strong emphasis on practical activities, and planning based on children's needs and interests, contributes to children's outstanding achievement.
- Teachers have a wide range of resources for almost all areas, though fewer for helping children to understand technological things.
- Teaching is outstanding because staff have an excellent understanding of how best to help young children learn, and ensure they make rapid progress.
- Children feel safe, secure and well looked after. As a result they show exemplary behaviour.
- Staff love their work and are a highly effective team. They are reflective practitioners, who welcome new ideas and are keen to try them out.
- Underpinning the school's success are the dedication and expertise of the headteacher. She is ably assisted by the other senior staff and governors.
- Governors challenge and support the school well, although parents and carers are not always made aware of the contribution that governors make.
- All parents spoken to were highly supportive of the school. One summed up their thoughts by saying, 'The teachers here feel like friends. They are easy to talk to and keep you well informed. Bilston Nursery is brilliant!'

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine sessions or parts of sessions. Five observations were made jointly with the headteacher. Snack time and a lunch session were also observed.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, members of staff, the Vice Chair of the Governing Body and representatives from the local authority.
- No parents had responded to the online parental questionnaire (Parent View), but the inspector took account of their views through discussions held with parents when they brought their children to school, and the views that staff expressed in the questionnaires they returned.
- The inspector observed the work of the school and looked at documentation, including teachers' planning, the school development plan, documents relating to safeguarding, data relating to children's progress, monitoring records, and records of governors' meetings.

## Inspection team

Mary Hughes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is of a typical size for a nursery school.
- A very small proportion of children are currently supported through early years action plus. None have a statement of special educational needs.
- A small proportion of children are at a very early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language.
- The majority of children are from White British or Indian backgrounds, with a range of other ethnic backgrounds represented.
- A few children stay for the full school day, but most attend for their entitlement of 15 hours a week.
- The headteacher is also the headteacher of another nearby nursery school.
- The school is fully integrated with a children's centre and a provision for children aged 0–3 years. Since the previous inspection a provision for children aged two has opened on site. All of these facilities are inspected separately. The headteacher and governing body have responsibility for all the provision on this site.
- The school has achieved the Investors in People award and has had its Quality Mark for Early Years recently renewed for a fourth time.

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

- Provide parents and carers with more information about the work governors do, and their impact in helping the school to improve.
- Provide a wider range of resources to help children further develop their technological skills.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children thoroughly enjoy their learning. Their ability to work well together and take responsibility for their own learning and their quickly developing independence underpin their extremely positive attitudes to learning.
- Children challenge themselves to try new things, knowing that adults will always be there to help if necessary. For example, they confidently climbed and balanced on a line of crates, making the course more difficult for themselves by adding extra crates. Due to the secure and encouraging atmosphere they quickly progress.
- When they first join, the children's skills are generally below the levels expected for their age. Many have limited communication and mathematical skills. By the time they leave most have developed the skills and understanding expected for their age and some are working at levels beyond this. This represents outstanding achievement in all areas of learning by children from all ethnic backgrounds. This demonstrates the substantial gains they make to narrow the gap between their attainment and that of children nationally.
- Children who are learning to speak English as an additional language make excellent progress, as do disabled children and those who have special educational needs. This is because they receive excellent support which is adapted exactly to their requirements. Excellent modelling by staff of how language is used and the nursery's strong emphasis on language development also contribute to the outstanding progress of these children, particularly in acquiring new words and vocabulary.
- The promotion of reading and writing skills is highly successful. An imaginative range of mark-making opportunities results in children's eagerness to develop writing skills. Children were very keen to make marks in the pile of baked beans, and with the artist's 'magic pens'. Many were able to write letter shapes, including letters from their own name. Some children wrote lists for the 'Healthy Eating Cafe' and for the role play hospital.
- A love of books is fostered through the regular sharing of books with their key workers. Good questioning during the reading of *The Owl Babies* helped children to make predictions about the story.
- Children make particularly rapid gains in their mathematical skills because of the school's highly effective promotion of numeracy and problem solving. Children developed good critical thinking skills as they delivered the correct number of milk cartons to the animals' houses. They were given excellent opportunities to reason and explain their actions.
- Fundamental to the children's rapid progress is the excellent emphasis given to promoting their personal, social and emotional development. Parents talk about how quickly children settle and quickly become immersed in nursery life.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding because the staff reflect on their practice daily, discussing individual children's learning and how their needs can be met in future planning. Staff think exceptionally carefully about the steps children need to take to learn new skills. As one said, 'We always endeavour to give each child an excellent start to their education.'

- Staff are highly skilled in giving children the confidence to find things out for themselves and extend their learning through a variety of questions. For example, the children were encouraged to find out more about how to care for Sammy the African land snail and then asked the staff their own insightful questions such as 'Where are Sammy's mummy and daddy?'
- Staff create an extremely purposeful atmosphere and a highly stimulating environment. This means that children have exciting opportunities to learn, both within the classroom and the outside areas. For example, children learnt outdoors about what snow does when it is melting or is raked. This experience was exceptionally successful in encouraging children to describe what they saw and felt because the staff asked probing questions to stimulate children's ideas and deepen their understanding. This knowledge was then transferred indoors as they hunted for hidden animals that live in icy countries.
- A wide range of resources is used imaginatively to promote children's learning in almost all areas. Particularly good use is made of natural resources. For example, children used pebbles and wicker rings to make sets of numbers up to ten. The school has rightly identified that there is a more limited range of resources to promote children's technological skills and understanding, including through information and communication technology.
- Many memorable experiences capture children's imagination. Children showed great wonderment as they watched the artist open the cans of beans and place them on the plastic sheet, and realised that they could draw in them 'without getting messy!' The 'forest school' sessions, which take place among the trees, give children the chance to develop their understanding of the world as they make bird feeders and identify the birds that visit the school.
- Very astute planning and assessment systems underpin all the activities. Planning is responsive to children's ideas, suggestions and interests. Every child is given the support he or she needs. All children are fully included in school life.

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

- The school is an outstandingly harmonious, safe community that welcomes all children. The excellent community spirit is seen throughout the day as children eat snacks and lunch together, chat confidently with staff and ask for help when needed.
  - Close liaison with the on-site childcare facilities and an excellent induction programme help families, as well as children, to prepare well for school. Parents spoke warmly of how quickly children settle into school and how they have 'great peace of mind when they leave the children'.
  - Children keenly start activities as soon as they arrive. They are clear about everyday routines and understand about sharing equipment. For example, children ably used a sand timer to take turns in using a computer game. Children quickly made friends and helped each other when finding aprons and putting on their coats and wellingtons.
  - Behaviour is exemplary. Children respond well to the high expectations of staff, who take every opportunity to remind them of the nursery rules such as 'good sitting' and using 'listening ears'. They show excellent levels of concentration and perseverance. They develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem.
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- Children ably learn to take small risks and work out how to keep themselves and others safe. For example, during the forest school session they walked over a steep bridge safely, reminding other children how they should do this. They remembered to drag large twigs and not wave them around so they wouldn't hurt anyone.
- Children are eager, curious and excited by the range of activities and experiences available to them. They develop attitudes that prepare them extremely well for primary school. The close links with the nearby primary school and other local schools ensure a smooth transition for children as they move up into the reception classes.

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

- The headteacher is an inspirational leader. The school has not stood still since its previous outstanding report. The building has been totally remodelled in order to provide a much larger environment for the nursery children. The services within the children's centre have been further developed and the extended care has grown. The headteacher now leads a complex organisation with great skill and care. The expertise of the headteacher is recognised in the local area, and the local authority uses the school as an example of 'best practice'.
- The headteacher is ably assisted by the senior staff, who provide outstanding role models for teaching, and are well respected by other staff.
- Staff have a great enthusiasm and commitment to the education and welfare of the children. All share the headteacher's vision of high-quality early years provision. They have regular opportunities to discuss and reflect on practice, develop professionally and gain additional qualifications. High-quality teamwork is a major factor in the school's ongoing success.
- The checking of teaching and learning is conducted well by the headteacher and deputy. Their consistently high profile in the nursery ensures that they can informally check that high expectations for children's learning are being met. Formal observations lead to the setting of rigorous targets for staff to continually help them to improve their performance.
- The rich curriculum interweaves many opportunities for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills to be developed. Many exciting activities create a sense of 'awe and wonder' in the children; for example, when children keenly anticipate what is contained in a magic box. Children from many backgrounds play productively together. Many projects allow them to learn successfully about different people's cultures in this country and abroad.
- The nursery has an excellent partnership with the local authority. Termly meetings and other regular discussions provide an objective view of the school's performance and help with its strategies for improvement, for example with the recent remodelling work.
- The school's partnership with parents is a major strength. They are given many opportunities to be actively involved in their children's learning. Workshops are held where children and their parents can work together. The recent 'Make and Be Merry' workshop saw children and parents working together to make a range of Christmas gifts. Parents spoke about how much they enjoyed sharing activities with their children. They are overwhelmingly positive about the school's effectiveness.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are committed to continuous improvement and carry out their statutory duties fully.

Governors are kept well informed and make good use of their expertise in support of the school. They regularly review the work of the headteacher and staff, and link pay to children's performance. They hold the school to account by asking challenging questions in meetings and sub-groups. Visits to look at what happens in session times are less frequent. This means that they are not always experiencing the nursery's work at first hand, and that parents and carers are not always aware of the value of governors' support. Governors monitor safeguarding procedures and fully understand their responsibilities in this area. They make sure that the school follows good practice in keeping children safe, and that staff are suitably checked and trained in child protection matters. They also make sure that decisions about how money is used are well considered to give best value.

## 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>	132018
<b>Local authority</b>	Wolverhampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	402529

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>	Alan Hughes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 July 2010
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