

# Oakengates Nursery School

The Place, Limeswalk, Telford, TF2 6EP

## Inspection dates

2–3 May 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.

- Governors and senior leaders are highly effective in evaluating the school's performance and planning for improvement. The outstanding quality reported at the last inspection has been developed even further.
- Children achieve exceptionally well in all areas of learning. They become highly effective independent learners who learn rapidly through enquiry and investigation.
- Early identification of each individual's needs and capabilities is used exceptionally well to ensure children of all abilities and background make excellent progress.
- Teaching is of a consistently high quality so all children benefit from outstanding teaching as they move from one activity to another and in their key focus groups.
- Much teaching is inspirational and is highly effective in engaging children so they stay fully focused over long periods of time.
- Children's behaviour is outstanding and makes an exceptional contribution to the excellent quality of their learning.
- The nursery provides excellent resources for children to learn in both adult-led and independent sessions. There are computers available for children, but the provision of interactive technology which they enjoy using immensely, is limited.
- High levels of attention are given to ensuring that children are kept safe at all times. Children quickly understand how to keep safe while in the nursery or out on visits.
- Team work among the staff is exceptionally strong. Senior leaders work alongside other staff and set an example of high quality teaching.
- The school has a very strong partnership with parents. All those spoken to during the inspection said they are delighted with what the staff are doing for their children.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed children learning in focused groups, adult-led and child-initiated activities, for five hours. These sessions were taught by three teachers, one senior lead supervisor and six early years' practitioners.
- Joint observations were carried out with the deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff. The inspector talked to children informally during observation times. He met with two representatives of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation including improvement plans and self-evaluation, as well as assessment data from the monitoring of children's progress. Documents detailing the nursery school's arrangements for safeguarding children were scrutinised.
- No views of parents and carers were available in Parent View (the Ofsted online questionnaire) but the inspector talked to a good number of parents who gave their views on the school at the beginning and end of each session.
- Questionnaire responses from 11 staff were considered.

## Inspection team

David Speakman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is similar in size to other nursery schools.
- Children join the nursery at the beginning of the term after their third birthday and are on roll for up to five terms. They attend for 15 hours each week but parents can buy extra sessions if available.
- Currently, 10 children speak English as an additional language. Most are at the early stages of learning English.
- Based on age and what they have achieved already, children are placed into one of six groups led by a 'key person' who leads much of their adult-led learning and monitors their progress.
- The staff make early identification of children who need extra support. Typically, the proportion of children supported through early years action, action plus or with a statement is 11% of the roll. There is full access to all school activities for disabled children.
- The Nursery School has eight children, who prior to attending, received vulnerable two-year-old funding. This is funding for disadvantaged children and aimed to give them an equal start to other children.

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

- Enhance information and communication technology resources to support further children's independent learning by:
  - providing interactive tablets, with age-appropriate programs to help them independently consolidate learning
  - designating a key person to manage the introduction of the resources and to help develop staff expertise in guiding children on how to use them.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children achieve exceptionally well in all areas of learning. Those who join not having previously transferred from the Toddler Room, start from levels below those expected for their age whilst those who have attended, join the nursery with attainment typical for their age. The large majority of children reach their age-related expectations in all areas of learning, with some exceeding them and reaching the early learning goals about a year before they are expected to.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs are identified quickly and receive well-focused support from an early stage. They are fully included in all activities and tasks are expertly matched to their individual requirements. They make excellent progress from the very beginning. The progress of children who attract the two-year-old vulnerable funding is carefully monitored. These make excellent progress to enable a smooth start to nursery education. Consequently gaps between the lowest-attaining pupils and others are quickly closing.
- Children who speak English as an additional language are equally well supported. Through high levels of spoken interaction with adults, they soon acquire enough English to become confident in speaking and listening and access all the opportunities for learning provided by the nursery.
- Children quickly learn early reading skills which provide a secure foundation for further work. All children receive a daily session learning about letters and the sounds they make. The children's key person ensures that they move onto more demanding work at a rapid pace. Children capable of harder work were choosing objects beginning with 'R' and writing words such as rose, robot and ring in legible writing and correctly spelt. Through daily story time, all children are able to connect books with stories and can retell a story such as 'The Hungry Caterpillar' and the story of 'Elmer', using pictures and recognising a good number of words.
- Opportunities to develop language are threaded through all activities and support learning so children soon become confident communicators. Constant interaction between adults and children, and between children themselves, means they acquire communication skills quickly and confidently engage in lively conversation, clearly expressing their ideas.
- Children count objects and accurately recognise numbers and their value. One group sorted all numbers containing three from a large set of numbers placed out on a table. They learn accurate subject vocabulary so they become fluent in talking about shapes. For example, one child went home to make hexagonal sandwiches, showing how well they transfer their learning in one area to another.
- Children thrive in 'forest school' sessions. They are inquisitive and asked sensible questions about anything they find. They are confident in being able to explore for themselves and become good observers. Children are inquisitive because they discover things for themselves. They have excellent levels of independence and are confident to try new experiences and to be adventurous. Importantly, they learn to be respectful of and care for the natural environment.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Adults respond exceptionally well to children's comments during teaching sessions and plan accordingly, so children engage readily and enthusiastically. Before a forest school session, children were asked what they wanted to do. They unanimously said they would like to climb

trees, and this was immediately included in the planned activities. This is typical of the skilled way in which teachers guide discussion so that ideas come from the children themselves and their learning is memorable.

- Many areas of strength in teaching have developed under the robust monitoring of the headteacher and other senior leaders. Staff have very high expectations of children's capabilities and provide consistent challenge to move children, at all attainment levels, on rapidly. They keep close records of individual progress in children's 'learning journeys' and, with senior leaders, use these assessments exceptionally well to plan the next steps for learning. Key persons constantly adjust the pace and level of challenge for their groups in response to how well children are progressing in a particular area.
- All adults are skilled in recognising and providing prompt support for those at risk of falling behind, disabled children or those who have special educational needs. Adults are acutely aware of each child's learning needs and, under the direction of senior leaders, carefully tailor learning activities to match capability exceptionally well, ensuring successful learning. In the same way adults are highly effective in moving high-attaining children on in their work.
- Highly focused questioning when adults join in with the children's play develops vocabulary, language and knowledge in different areas of learning particularly well. For example, when children were exploring symmetrical patterns using interactive technology, they responded very well to expertly focused questions from an adult. They very quickly learned how to draw symmetrical patterns with two axes of symmetry and talked freely about how the patterns were emerging. However, resources for this popular activity are limited.

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

- Children thoroughly enjoy coming to nursery. This shows in their looks of anticipation whilst waiting to come in at the beginning of sessions and in their reluctance to leave at the end. High levels of engagement in activities means that their behaviour is outstanding and this contributes enormously to the excellent quality of learning and the calm but busy atmosphere.
- Children share and take turns with equipment and other resources. They behave in a safe manner, for example taking care not to bump into others whilst riding tricycles in the outdoor area or when attempting the climbing wall up to the slide. Children have a very clear understanding of risks because adults make them aware of potential dangers and then encourage them to proceed carefully. This is clearly seen in their walk to the forest school site, where their behaviour out of school is impeccable and staff are confident that children behave in a manner that does not put them at risk.
- Children are good at making choices and they are confident in joining in or initiating different activities. They sustain their concentration and stay engaged for lengthy periods, showing excellent gains in knowledge and skills development. They work very well in collaboration with other children and many 'telephone chats' often take place in role play activity.
- Children are very considerate and cooperate well with each other in group activities. They are aware the different needs children have and automatically include all others in their activities, for example including disabled children in catching activities. The 'investigate and explore' approach to learning is highly effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

- Staff are exceptionally well led by the headteacher and work as a highly effective team. They use their considerable teaching skills to provide an outstanding education. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, and other senior leaders have very high expectations of the work of the staff. They work alongside and support the early years' practitioners so professional supervision is of the highest quality. At the time of its previous inspection, the nursery was judged to be outstanding. Since then, strengths have been maintained and built upon.
- Day-to-day organisation is exceptionally smooth. During child initiated activity times, a member of the team is responsible for making assessments on children's progress and recording them through taking notes or photographs, leaving other staff to engage with children. This is done through consultation with the key group leaders, who advise team members of their priorities for that day. This provides secure evidence of children's progress and for planning the next steps for learning.
- The safety of children is given a high priority and arrangements for keeping them safe are very well managed. Staff make very careful daily checks of any potential risks and ensure all are fully aware. Leaders ensure the safe recruitment of staff and full checks are made on any adult working in the nursery. Staff are well trained in child protection to a level appropriate to their responsibility; all are vigilant. There are ample competent first aiders.
- Equality is promoted exceptionally well and there is no discrimination of any kind. Children show respectful attitudes to other children, whatever their background, ability or disability. Each child's curriculum experiences are carefully monitored to ensure children access all areas of learning and that each has a balanced curriculum. This ensures that all children have equality of opportunity to make progress.
- The nursery staff strive to maintain strong relationships with parents. They are kept informed about their children's progress during the open week each term and are involved in agreeing the next steps targets for their children. They are kept informed on a daily basis of any important issues and the school operates an 'open door' policy. All parents spoken to were enthusiastic about the effectiveness of the nursery for their children.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has a clear understanding of the nursery's effectiveness. Members have good levels of relevant professional expertise, are fully involved through regular visits and are therefore in a strong position to monitor and evaluate the nursery's work and to take a prominent role in strategic planning. They have a clear understanding of the nursery's assessment data and know how well children, including those who qualified for two-year-old vulnerable funding, are progressing.
  - They know how effective staff are through their involvement in the robust performance management process, visits and detailed feedback from the headteacher. They have a strong role helping maintain high quality teaching. They meet all of their statutory duties in relation to safeguarding.

## 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>	123348
<b>Local authority</b>	Telford and Wrekin
<b>Inspection number</b>	402152

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
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	89
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Fiona Wright
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kay Darlington
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01952 387910
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