

# Rothesay Nursery School

59 Rothesay Road, Luton, LU1 1RB

**Inspection dates** 18–19 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- The school's effectiveness has declined. The headteacher and governors have not taken the necessary action to reverse this decline by improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Too much teaching requires improvement or is inadequate, and not enough is good or better to enable children to achieve well.
- Adults do not talk to children in an appropriate way that promotes learning and encourages essential speaking and listening skills. This weakness was raised at the previous inspection, and it has not improved. It affects all children, but particularly those who speak English as an additional language.
- Activities are not always supported by suitably stimulating toys or other resources. They do not take enough account of the individual needs or abilities of the children, especially the two-year-olds.
- The planned sessions do not focus adequately on developing children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- Adults do not insist on suitable standards of behaviour. There are too many incidents of anti-social and unruly behaviour, and they are not always managed effectively to avoid disruptions to learning.
- Staff and governors do not have an accurate awareness of the performance of the nursery, and judge it to be better than it actually is.
- Although current safeguarding requirements are met, governors and staff are not always sufficiently vigilant about potential health and safety risks.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children who have additional learning needs make good progress when they are taught in small groups.
- Staff and governors have the confidence of the parents, who feel that their children are safe and happy.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with half a day’s notice and took place over two days.
- The inspectors observed 21 parts of sessions taught by four teachers, five early years educators and three early years workers.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school’s own judgements on its strengths and weaknesses, improvement plans, documents relating to safeguarding, and information previously collected by the school relating to the views of parents.
- There were too few responses to take account of the online Parent View survey.
- The views of the staff were considered through the analysis of 17 completed staff questionnaires.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, staff, children, parents, governors and a representative from the local authority.

## Inspection team

Nina Bee, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Marion Thompson, Team inspector	Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.*

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

## Information about this school

- Rothesay Nursery currently offers places for 165 children who attend part time. This includes 21 children who are eligible for additional funding for two-year-olds.
- Children come from a wide range of different minority ethnic groups. Two thirds speak English as an additional language.
- The nursery has specially resourced provision for children with special educational needs, which is managed by the school and funded by the local authority. It currently supports six children who have severe and complex needs.
- The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs supported through early years school action, and through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs, is below average.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and children's achievement by ensuring that:
  - all staff plan activities that are stimulating, demanding and supported by a suitable range of resources, so all children are fully involved in learning throughout every session
  - adults intervene regularly and effectively during activities to keep the pace of learning high
  - staff take every opportunity to promote language effectively so that all children, and particularly those who speak English as an additional language, develop more confidence and competence in their speaking skills
  - activities are adapted so they are challenging but achievable for all children, particularly those who are two years old.
- Improve children's behaviour by:
  - establishing clear expectations for behaviour, both indoors and out, sharing them with staff and applying them at all times
  - ensuring that all adults do not tolerate any anti-social or unruly behaviour
  - insisting that all children show respect to each other, visitors and the adults who help them.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - teaching is monitored rigorously and regularly, with a sharp focus on children's learning
  - staff and governors develop a more accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement
  - staff and governors give health and safety issues a suitably high priority at all times
  - an external review of governance is undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved
  - children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is promoted more effectively.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- When children start in the nursery, their skills, knowledge and understanding are low for their age. Currently, only a small minority of children are on course to reach the levels expected nationally across the different areas of learning, and very few are likely to exceed these levels. Not enough children achieve well because most teaching requires improvement or is inadequate.
- The children who are due to move on to Reception classes next term have not made the progress they should. As a result, they are not adequately prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Achievement for the two-year-olds is inadequate because teachers' planning rarely takes enough account of their age or stage of development. During the inspection, many children in this age group wandered around and achieved little.
- When all children take part in activities they choose for themselves, achievement varies but is generally not as good as it should be. Even when adults interact with the children they do not always do so productively, so the children quickly lose interest and flit off to something else.
- When disabled children and those who have special educational needs, including those in the resourced provision, are taught in small groups they achieve well. This is because their specific needs are identified, and they are supported by a good number of adults. However, when children are taught together during 'carpet time' and sit together listening to an adult, the achievement of all ability groups often requires improvement or is inadequate. This is because individual needs are not suitably catered for, and many children find it difficult to stay focused.
- Similarly, children who speak English as an additional language do not achieve as well as they should during carpet time sessions. Adults do not make sure that they fully understand what is being said, and do not skilfully reinforce and develop children's vocabulary to improve their speaking skills. As a result, many children were observed having difficulty concentrating, and so lost interest in learning.

### The quality of teaching

### is inadequate

- There is not enough good teaching to ensure that children learn well. Typically, adults do not interact with individuals or groups in a way that reinforces and develops children's skills, knowledge and understanding effectively.
- Interactions are sometimes too brief. Adults move on too quickly, and children who have difficulty with what they are doing become frustrated and wander off. For example, a child was having difficulty working the computer. An adult briefly spoke to him, but was not successful in helping. As a result, the child still could not move the cursor around the screen, so just got up and walked away. Learning was minimal.
- The ineffective promotion of language and speaking skills particularly affects learning and progress for the large majority of children who speak English as an additional language, those who have speech and language difficulties, and those who are reluctant talkers.
- Many children were seen trying to avoid speaking to adults because they found speaking difficult and lacked the confidence to have a go. For example, children played happily alongside each

other as they used play dough to make cakes, but few initiated a conversation with each other. When adults did interact, children often ignored them or answered with one-word responses. There were few instances of adults successfully developing children's confidence in speaking.

- Teaching is not planned to take account of or address the limited speech that many children have. Children are often asked questions that are too complicated and confusing, and their low levels of language are not systematically built up by adults through interactions. Often, children do not understand what they have been asked and reply with answers that clearly show a lack of understanding. For example, one child when asked by an inspector 'What colour is that?', responded 'Burger'.
- Children have regular opportunities to play as they learn inside and outside. At times, adults' low expectations are reflected in mundane activities that are not enlivened or made exciting by suitably stimulating resources. Children get bored and move on, and learning is minimal.
- On the few occasions when teaching is good, children are interested because adults skilfully ask questions to check their understanding, so they are keen to talk. In these sessions, good learning and behaviour are expected from everyone.

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

- Although many children know how to behave, some are disrespectful towards each other, the adults who help them and visitors. A considerable amount of inappropriate behaviour was observed, and it was not dealt with promptly enough by staff. For example, a child threw a rubber brick at a visitor and thrust a plastic sword at her. This was not noticed quickly enough by the staff. Some children acted in a silly way while playing in the meadow attached to the outside play area. They shouted loudly as they chased the chickens and were allowed to do this for too long before an adult intervened. A good opportunity was missed to stress the need to look after and care for animals.
- Staff do not receive enough guidance from senior leaders about the distinction between children's acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, or how to help children to behave properly. Consequently, some adults allow children to run around and become boisterous. Others do not suitably or successfully intervene when children display anti-social or unruly behaviour.
- Adults' expectations vary considerably and are not always high enough. For example, not all children were expected to wash their hands before eating their bread and butter snack. No fruit was offered. The adult missed opportunities to interact with the children to explain the need to eat healthily, or to reinforce the importance of tidying the table after eating or placing chairs under tables as a safety precaution. In contrast, in another snack time, health and safety, hygiene and independence were promoted well as children prepared for their snacks, ate showing good table manners, and tidied up after they had finished.
- When given responsibility, children rise to the occasion. For example, children confidently chose their own drinks during snack time and, when asked, they knew that milk was white and 'made them strong'.
- While attendance is not compulsory for children of this age, staff have worked hard and successfully to improve it since the previous inspection, when it was an issue. Most children attend regularly because they say they like coming to play with their friends.

**The leadership and management are inadequate**

- The headteacher and staff do not have a clear understanding of the nursery's strengths and its main priorities for improvement, such as the quality of teaching, so they have not focused enough on improving children's learning. Some key weaknesses, such as the way adults interact with individuals and groups, have not been successfully addressed. Monitoring of teaching and learning has not been regular or rigorous enough. As a result, achievement, teaching and leadership are inadequate.
- The way learning is planned does not focus sufficiently on promoting children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children have many opportunities to develop confidence as they take part in activities they choose themselves. However, they are not shown the importance of being respectful and kind towards each other. This results in displays of anti-social and unruly behaviour. Little is done to promote children's cultural awareness or celebrate their differences.
- The system to enable staff to develop their professional skills is linked appropriately to both their individual needs and the Teachers' Standards. Staff are appropriately qualified for the jobs they do. However, weaknesses in teaching are not identified clearly enough because leaders do not focus closely on the impact of teaching on children's learning.
- Staff focus appropriately on making sure that all children are treated equally. All children are welcomed and fully included in nursery activities, regardless of their background or individual needs. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Staff and governors are not always sufficiently alert to health and safety risks, particularly in the outside area. Various minor issues were raised by the inspection team during the inspection, although the school quickly addressed them.
- The school buys in a limited amount of help and guidance from the local authority, which it says has been supportive. Parents are positive about the work of the nursery, and the way their children are educated.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet current national requirements. Appropriate checks on adults are carried out to safeguard children, and their general welfare is monitored.
  - Governors are involved in the process of checking the nursery's strengths and weaknesses. However, as both they and the staff have an inaccurate view of its effectiveness, neither group is successfully focused on improving teaching and thus children's achievement. Governors do not question school data well enough to be sure how well children are doing.
  - The governors are experienced and undertake further training when necessary. They monitor spending appropriately and are suitably involved in making decisions about staff pay rises and promotion, especially those of 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>	109419
<b>Local authority</b>	Luton
<b>Inspection number</b>	405235

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>	2–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	165
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jonathan Lodge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Janet Brownjohn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 726966
<b>Fax number</b>	01582 726966
<b>Email address</b>	rothesay.nursery.head@luton.gov.uk



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