

# Boundstone Nursery School

Upper Boundstone Lane, Lancing, West Sussex, BN15 9QY

**Inspection dates** 18–19 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Children make good progress, especially in learning to get along with each other, as well as in developing the basic skills that will help them to communicate, read, write, count and problem solve.
- Teaching and support are good. There are outstanding features in how work is planned and revised weekly to interest children and provide them with a range of activities that will help them to learn through play, while meeting their needs.
- Children are extremely well cared for, and are happy and well behaved as a result.
- Senior leaders and governors run the school well. Self-evaluation is honest and accurate, and is underpinning the school's capacity for more improvement.
- The specialist support centre is very well managed so that children get just the right mix of being able to join in the free flow of activities with everyone else and expert one-to-one and small-group support.
- Links with parents and carers, the children's centre and outside agencies are excellent.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not outstanding. There are some fine examples which the school is already building on to make improvements, but a small minority of support reflects a lack of clear understanding of how children learn.
- The interpretation and use of information collected about children's progress, although used effectively to help individual children achieve well, has only recently been collated in ways that will prove how well the school is doing.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons taught by eight different teachers and support staff. Four observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- He met with parents and carers at the start of the day, the Chair and four members of the Governing Body, staff and a representative of the local authority.
- He looked at children's work and their progress journals.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey for information to be used in this inspection, but reference was made to the school's own recent parental survey.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at school documentation, including data on children's progress, evidence of self-evaluation and monitoring records.
- He took account of the 16 questionnaire responses from staff.

## Inspection team

Michael Burghart, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average nursery school with places for 70 children in the morning and 70 in the afternoon.
- The school includes a specialist support centre for speech and language for 16 children, split between morning and afternoon. Currently, 14 children are attending. For most of the time, such children are fully integrated with other nursery children, albeit with extra specific support.
- Virtually all children are of White British heritage. A small minority speak English as an additional language.
- A very small proportion of children come from Traveller families.
- The proportions of pupils who are supported by school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are well above average.
- During the inspection, one of the six teachers was on maternity leave. Her role was being taken by a long-term temporary teacher. Since the last inspection, there have been many changes of staff, including the headteacher and nursery manager. The headteacher and inclusion manager are leaving at the end of this term.

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

- Build on the excellent examples that are already present in the school to move teaching from good to outstanding by:
  - ensuring that all staff have as good an understanding of how young children learn as the majority of teachers and support assistants do, and that their questioning always extends children's understanding and communication skills.
- Improve the use of assessment information to identify strengths and areas for development in children's progress across each area of learning required in the Early Years Foundation Stage and use this to track the success of initiatives designed to bring about improvement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start nursery with skills and experiences that are below those normally expected of this age. In some cases, particularly in terms of speaking and listening, skills are well below. Children make good progress at the same time as having fun, whatever their backgrounds or ability, and this has been the case year on year since the last inspection. Those who speak English as an additional language make the same good progress as everyone else.
- Parents and carers, and staff, agree with the findings of this inspection that children achieve well in gaining the basic skills. These skills enable the children to emerge as readers and writers as well as being able to count and appreciate terms such as 'less than' and 'more than'. Progress is especially good in learning how to listen to other children and adults, as well as speaking. The school's policy of systematically introducing children to the link between letters and sounds (phonics) is very effective. Role play in the 'vets' swiftly moves on from cuddling various toy animals to making appointments on the phone and recording diagnoses.
- Progress in personal, social and emotional development is excellent, with children settling into the routines of nursery smoothly. They appreciate the need for rules and are already aware of right and wrong. There is plenty of evidence that children share and take turns without having to be directed to do so. Queuing for rides on bikes and scooters, and playing together in the sand and water trays without fuss, are very good examples of children interacting well and beginning to consider the feelings of others.
- Physical development is good, with many children able to ride bikes without stabilisers, and all having learnt to steer and brake. Climbing skills are good, whether on the trees (well supervised) or on the wide variety of climbing frames. Children use large construction sets well to express themselves and to design creatures (dinosaurs are currently very popular), and make good progress in developing the finer control needed to manage jigsaws and hold painting and writing equipment.
- Knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development are fostered effectively by the range of activities planned and laid out for children to choose. Good examples include using large magnifying glasses to look carefully at worms and ants, and observing how things grow in regularly tending the school allotment area. Children are making good progress in beginning to understand how they as individuals fit into the wider scheme of things and to appreciate the beauty of nature.
- Children based in the specialist centre are fully integrated in the free flow of activities and make outstanding progress in developing their speech and language skills as a result of playing with others and the close support of expert staff.
- Those children who are from Traveller families make similar progress to other children as a result of good well-targeted support.
- Achievement is not yet outstanding because, on a few occasions, the dialogue children have with some adults does not do enough to extend their thinking and communication skills. This is the result of a very small minority of staff not having a secure enough understanding of the ways in which young children learn, and so not asking sufficiently perceptive questions which children have to reflect on before answering.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers are well supported by a range of support staff, some of whom are very well qualified. Together, they make a strong team which knows children well. Individual needs, not only for those with special educational needs but for all the children, are well catered for. Planning on a weekly basis, to deliver the required curriculum through what captures children's interest, works well. 'Superheroes' this week and 'people who help us' next week are examples of what makes learning enjoyable.

- Staff make good use of day-to-day observations and note what children can do, know and understand. They keep excellent records in children's progress books. Collating this information, in ways that prove how effective the nursery is as a whole, is work in progress and not yet fully effective across all areas of learning.
- Teaching for children based in the specialist support centre is not simply the prerogative of centre staff. As all children are involved in free-flow activities inside and out they come in contact with a wide range of adults. There is an outstanding system whereby all staff have laminated cards in the bags slung around their waists showing the targets for those with special needs. This means that everyone is aware of the relevant programmes, and this has very positive effects on progress.
- Relationships at all levels are strong, and parents and carers commented very enthusiastically to the inspector on how well they feel that their children are taught and cared for.
- School records of the monitoring of teaching over the last three years mirror the findings of this inspection. Teaching ranges from a minority that requires improvement, where some staff do not always make the most of talking to children to extend their understanding, to some examples of outstanding teaching. At the water tray, excellent teaching skilfully moved boys on from simply floating their ducks to building chutes to launch them, and then developing fair tests to make comparisons. Some of the relative weaknesses in teaching have been the result of instability, with six changes in staffing sometimes interrupting the flow of learning.

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

- Behaviour is typically good. Parents and carers, and staff, agree that it has long been the case. It is not yet outstanding from this point of view because there are a minority of children who can, but rarely, present problems. However, they are not allowed to disrupt activities and any outbursts are used as learning opportunities to help children understand how they can affect others.
- Children are eager to come into nursery and are used to the routines of choosing activities freely. They show very positive attitudes to learning, and happily join in.
- Children respond well to being very well cared for, and clearly feel safe. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered particularly well through the vibrant and enjoyable curriculum. All children are treated equally and there is a zero tolerance to any form of discrimination. Any signs of bullying or racist behaviour are rare and effectively dealt with.
- Even at such a young age, children are taught how to take care of themselves and how to eat healthily. They are aware of the dangers of electricity and introduced to road safety while riding bikes and trikes. They all know who to turn to if they have a problem.
- Everyone appreciates that this is a nursery that is true to its motto, 'A place to learn, a place to play, a place where everyone can have a say'.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher's strong ambition and high expectations have driven improvements over the last three years. Under pressure to address a deficit budget and frequent changes of staff, with sometimes temporary appointments, the caring nature of the school and its strong commitment to learning through play have been maintained. The headteacher and the senior leadership team, well supported by the governing body and middle leaders, have a very clear idea of what works well and what can still be improved. Even with the imminent departure of the headteacher and inclusion coordinator, the school is well placed for further improvement rooted in policies, systems and procedures already established.
- Self-evaluation is honest and accurate. Senior leaders and governors were keen to show the inspector why the school is not yet outstanding, in the terms of this inspection framework, and how it can become so. Rightly, they have identified that teaching is good rather than outstanding. Their monitoring records show how they came to this conclusion, as well as how

the process of performance management and, where possible, salary enhancement are improving quality.

- Special needs provision, both in the school overall as well as in the specialist support centre, is a strength which results in children making good, and frequently very good, progress. Leadership and management of extra provision for those who speak English as an additional language and for Travellers are good. Excellent links with outside agencies, and particularly the children's centre, make a significant contribution to children's learning.
- The school has been through a transitional period with regard to the way children's progress is recorded and evaluated. It works very well to support day-to-day and individual improvement. However, analysis is not yet sophisticated enough for senior leaders to be able to prove what they already know about progress against all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.
- Communication with parents and carers, although still a target for improvement in the school's own planning, is good. There is clear information about events and opportunities to support the school, alongside very good learning journals that show parents and carers how children are getting on.
- The local authority gives effective support, for example in advice for staff appointments and with regard to curriculum planning.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is good. Also acting as the governing body for the children's centre on the same site, governors are in an excellent position to maintain an overview of all provision available to families in the locality. Their involvement enhances links with outside agencies, particularly with regard to specialist support. Governors are regularly involved in visiting the nursery to see for themselves what goes on in school. They have a good understanding of the needs of young children, and through their training have developed a good awareness of how Boundstone compares with other nurseries. They are fully involved in the performance management of staff and are in a good position to hold the school to account for the effect of teaching on children's learning. Governors have a growing appreciation of children's progress rates, although, as for senior staff, this has been limited by the transition from one recording system to another.
  - Decisions are effectively evaluated in terms of the impact initiatives have on children's learning. Difficult decisions to deal with the overstaffing that was the cause of the significant overspend were taken boldly, but sensitively. The school's strength in supporting special needs and children's personal development was sustained throughout. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and are very effective.

## 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>	125810
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	402354

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>	3–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	140
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Aedan Kerney
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rachel Ayuba
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15–16 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01903 753995
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