

# Millfields Nursery School Community Services

Lichfield Road, Bloxwich, Walsall, WS3 3LU

## Inspection dates

3–4 October 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.

- Children love coming to the Nursery and their behaviour is exemplary. They work and play extremely well together and have excellent manners.
- All children, including those with particular learning needs, make at least good progress and many make much better progress so that their achievement is outstanding in all areas of learning.
- Children have strong relationships with the adults in the Nursery and, as a result, they have great confidence in themselves and feel very safe.
- All staff have a thorough and detailed knowledge of the needs of young children. They plan exciting activities that build on the children's interests and enthusiasms and help them make progress.
- Children love to play inside and outside, making full use of the excellent resources that are constantly being developed to support their learning needs.
- Children's independence is encouraged at all times and they are able to look after themselves and make decisions about what activities to take part in.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, want the very best for the children. They check the work of the Nursery thoroughly and identify developments that will raise achievement further.
- All staff and members of the governing body value the opportunities to improve their knowledge and understanding so that they can improve the quality of provision further.
- Parents and carers highly value the Nursery. They are confident that their children are well looked after and appreciate how the staff work closely with the whole family.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector spent half the inspection time in children’s learning sessions and saw seven members of staff teaching and working with the children. She was accompanied by the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with members of staff, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed the work of the school and looked at its development plans, minutes of governing body meetings, the school’s records of children’s progress and their learning journeys.
- As well as informal discussions with parents and carers during the inspection, account was taken of the 14 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View.

## Inspection team

Jenny Batelen, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Millfields has the equivalent of 96 part-time places. Children attend the school after their third birthday and attend different sessions to suit parents' and carers' requirements.
- The school shares its site with Walsall Academy, an 11–18 secondary school.
- Children are mostly from White British backgrounds with a very small minority from a range of other heritages. No children are at the early stages of speaking English.
- The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs supported through early years action is below that expected.
- The proportion of children supported at early years action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below that expected. These include children with complex learning needs.
- A new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school provides childcare for 24 children from birth to three years, wrap-around care for 16 nursery children and before- and after-school care for 24 children from the Nursery and a local primary school. This daycare provision is run privately and is not part of this inspection.

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

- Increase children's independence in extending their own learning by helping them to discuss the activity they have done and what they would like to do next.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- The majority of children enter the Nursery with skill levels that are well below those expected for their age, especially in reading, writing and physical development.
- School tracking shows how all children, including the few from minority ethnic groups, make at least good progress in all areas of learning and many make exceptional progress. By the time they leave Nursery, most children have skills that meet age-related expectations and are very well equipped to make the transition to Reception classes.
- The leaders of the school carefully analyse the progress of each group of children in the school, but the focus is the individual child. They gain a full understanding of the home circumstances so that they can work with each family to ensure children make the best possible progress. This is warmly welcomed by parents and carers and as a result there is equality of opportunity for all children and there is no discrimination.
- The needs of disabled children and those who have special educational needs are very well understood because staff work closely with families and with other agencies involved. The staff take care to ensure these children are fully involved in all activities and that they can make at least good progress because of the targeted support and close match of activities to their needs.
- Children are exposed to stories, songs and books and often choose to look at a book. The focus story of The Hungry Caterpillar with linked activities, such as searching for the caterpillar using magnifying lenses, gave the children a love of the story. They developed the ability to join in with the story as it was read and demonstrated great excitement about what might happen next as well as developing their understanding of the world.
- Sounds that letters make (phonics) and their shapes are often introduced incidentally as well as in focus group times when children learn to say and recognise initial letter sounds.
- Early writing skills are highly valued and opportunities to write are present throughout the Nursery both inside and outside. As a result children make very good progress in developing these skills and in the manipulation and control of pens and pencils.
- More-able children are identified and grouped so that they can be challenged to acquire higher-level skills and understanding. Following a visit to the local fruit farm they were encouraged to write a sentence to describe the photo of their visit. Several demonstrated their skills as they wrote recognisable letter shapes.
- Mathematics development is a priority for the school and children have many opportunities to count, and recognise numbers and shapes as well as learning the language of measure.
- Children's independence is always encouraged and they are able to take care of their personal care and hygiene needs. Easy access to resources means they can easily choose their activities. Staff encourage children to think about what they want to do, whether inside or outside, and are beginning to help children reflect on the activity they have done and how they would like to develop this further.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- Staff have high expectations of what children can achieve and they plan closely together to ensure that children are able to make rapid progress. They identify skills that need developing and the children's interests so that they can plan activities that encourage and excite. When staff identified that children needed to develop the skill of blowing rather than sucking in order to make bubbles, these opportunities were planned for both inside and outside.
- Constant, skilled questioning ensures that adults know what children are thinking and how they are developing an understanding of the activities they are engaged in. As a result, they are able to respond very well to the children's enthusiasms and also correct any misunderstandings.
- Adults ensure that children acquire good language skills, helping them to respond in sentences

and also challenging them to learn subject-specific language. More-able children learnt that the fruit farm is well watered because of 'irrigation' while another group learnt that the caterpillar has made a 'cocoon'.

- Themes provide activities that link together, such as celebrating the harvest festival and peeling, cutting and chopping vegetables in the kitchens inside and out after visiting a farm.
- Staff regularly and very thoroughly assess children's progress using photographs and text. The records of children's progress in Nursery and the clearly identified next steps they need to take are impressive and are highly valued by parents and carers.
- The well-resourced outside space and the developing Forest School area mean that children have many opportunities to run, jump, slide and develop their physical skills. They enjoy being outside to take part in a full range of activities from creating a mosaic table for 'the park keeper's cottage' to exploring how vegetables and flowers grow in the growing area and the mud kitchen.

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

- Children behave exceptionally well. They settle quickly and form strong and trusting relationships with all staff in the Nursery and, as a result, feel very safe.
- The outstanding teaching means that children thoroughly enjoy the activities, are enthusiastic to take part and so are fully engaged in their learning and sustain concentration for long periods of time.
- They learn to play extremely well together and to share resources and the space. Adults have an excellent understanding of the children's stages of development and this means they manage behaviour exceptionally well. Diverting children who were using the toy pushchair to push themselves, to pushing a doll instead, led to the doll being treated for being 'very sick' and sustained play on this theme.
- Children learn excellent manners. During the inspection children were heard to say 'please', 'sorry' and 'thank you' without any prompting and to invite an adult to join in their play with 'Would you like to....?'
- There is an appropriate anti-bullying policy in place, but the individual nature of working with the children means there is no bullying, and children behave extremely safely towards each other.
- Children learn to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. This was demonstrated by the way they moved around the nursery space, inside and outside, with care and learnt to use knives and peelers safely. They learn to cross the road, use public transport safely and enjoy the visit from the fire brigade to help them learn about fire safety.
- Parents and carers view the Nursery as a very safe and welcoming place for themselves and their children.

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

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher give very strong leadership with a clear vision of continuous improvement that is shared by all staff. The mission statement of 'We play, learn and achieve together' is reflected throughout the Nursery not only in displays, but in the way adults and children work together.
- Improvements since the previous inspection, including staff restructuring and new appointments, have ensured that children continue to make excellent progress and that the nursery provision is continually being developed. As a result the school has a strong capacity to make further improvements.
- Staff value the process that checks teaching skills, which is linked to the school's priorities and ensures that they can develop their skills and meet the performance targets that are set for them. This is because they understand that they are responsible for children making at least good progress.

- School self-evaluation clearly identifies actions that will further improve the Nursery and this is reflected in the further development of the outside area and the Forest School space.
- Leaders have established thorough assessment procedures and tracking of children's progress so that this can inform the planning process and maintain children's excellent progress. The school has identified how this can be further strengthened, particularly by involving children in identifying how they have enjoyed their activity and what they could do next.
- Many exciting visits, visitors and activities enhance the curriculum and build up children's understanding of the world they live in. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well promoted. There are many more opportunities than at the time of the previous inspection for children to learn about the multicultural nature of the United Kingdom and of how their friends celebrate, enjoy a range of different foods and wear special clothes. Children are encouraged to use all their senses and to develop a sense of wonder about the world they are part of.
- Parents and carers value the Nursery highly. They told the inspector how the staff know the children so well and also get to know the whole family. They also commented that the Nursery is 'all about the child'. Parents and carers appreciate how the presence of the daycare provision enables their children to access wrap-around care, which helps them as a family.
- The local authority gives light touch support to this outstanding setting. The senior leaders of the Nursery support other settings to improve aspects of their provision.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body are knowledgeable and have a thorough understanding of the work of the Nursery. They share the passion of the senior leaders to ensure that there is continuous improvement. They are well informed about the progress children make and of how well prepared they are to move on to the Reception classes in local schools. Governors ask searching questions of senior leaders and are involved in evaluating the work of the Nursery. As a result, they understand the strengths of the Nursery and how well staff work to promote the best possible outcomes for the children. They work closely with the headteacher to ensure that pay scales and progression reflect staff skills and abilities. The budget is well managed and, as a result, the governing body and senior leaders can plan for further developments to enhance the provision further. Governors have a range of skills and access training whenever possible to benefit the work of the Nursery. Governors ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are rigorously enforced so that children are safe and protected.

## 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>	104138
<b>Local authority</b>	Walsall
<b>Inspection number</b>	427067

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>	64
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kirsten Wilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lynne Emery
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10–11 January 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01922 714830
<b>Fax number</b>	01922 405136
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