

Aughton Early Years Centre

Main Street, Aughton, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S26 3XH

Inspection dates

26–27 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
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 of all abilities make excellent progress and achieve high standards especially in their personal and social skills as well as their early reading, writing and counting skills. Children are very happy, busy and curious about the world around them.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs make outstanding progress in response to the excellent care and support they receive. The few children who speak English as an additional language are also extremely well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Lessons are well planned to inspire children to make the best progress they can. All adults skilfully question children and involve them in making decisions about their own learning.
- The school has extremely effective partnerships with other Early Years Foundation Stage providers including those in the centre. Relationships between staff, children and their parents are excellent. This all contributes to children's outstanding behaviour, their safety and their well-being.
- The well-organised classrooms and high quality resources engage children's curiosity and contribute significantly to their eagerness to learn. They especially love learning in the extensive and attractive grounds and the school is exploring ways to make this environment even more informative and challenging.
- The head of centre is highly ambitious for the school and sets a very clear direction with excellent support from other senior leaders. All staff make a strong contribution to the school's effectiveness and many of them take lead roles in developing Early Years Foundation Stage practice throughout the local authority.
- As a result of outstanding leadership and a very effective governing body the school has successfully maintained children's excellent achievement and the high quality of teaching since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed a wide range of sessions in the nursery over the two days, including joint observations with the head of centre and other senior staff.
- Discussions were held with children, the Chair and other members of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority, and members of staff.
- The inspector took account of four responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 51 responses to the school's own recent consultation with parents. The inspector also talked to several parents during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including data that records children's current and previous progress, the school development plan, performance management documentation and records relating to children's' behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Andrew Clark, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized nursery school.
- The large majority of children are from White British families. A small but increasing proportion of children are of Eastern European heritage and speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs supported by Early Years school action is below average.
- The proportion of children supported at Early Years school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school provides additional 'wrap-around' care for children outside normal school hours through its breakfast, lunchtime and after-school clubs.
- The head of centre has been appointed to the post since the last inspection.
- There is daycare provision, a pre-school and a children's centre on site. These are managed by the governing body and also led by the head of centre. They are subject to separate inspections.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the already excellent outdoor provision to use as a model of best practice by:
 - creating further high quality, continually available, experiences for children to explore and deepen their understanding of letters, words and numbers in the outdoor environment.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Overall, children start school with skills that are typical for their age, although they are often lower for speech and language and other aspects of communication. Children of all abilities make outstanding progress during the time in the Nursery school and leave to enter Reception classes in the primary school with levels of development that are above those typically expected.
- There has been a very good trend of continually improving standards since the last inspection. This is because all adults expect the best for all children. Both boys and girls make outstanding progress in a wide range of areas of learning.
- Children make excellent progress in developing their personal and social skills. This lays a firm foundation for their future learning. For example, they listen very attentively to their teachers and to each other and follow instructions carefully. They make decisions about many aspects of their work and play and stick at activities until they are completed. They work together exceptionally well. For example, children filling wheel barrows with leaves worked as a team and shared their labours without any direction from the adults.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs make excellent progress from their individual starting points. For example, the use of a sign and picture language and skilfully worded questions by the teacher helps children decide for themselves and select from new skills they have learned to solve problems. The strong focus given to their speaking and other communication skills, sometimes with specialist support, allows children to make their thoughts and ideas clear to others.
- The most-able children make outstanding progress because they have many opportunities to use their initiative and develop skills to a high level. This is very evident in children's extended sentence writing, for example, on the life cycle of the butterfly and inspiring and very carefully observed artwork.
- Children who may be in vulnerable circumstances and find learning difficult also make extremely good progress and reach standards that are close to their peers. Teachers fill gaps in their learning through intensive support programmes, such as those that encourage talking, so they are also equipped to be independent and self-motivated in their learning.
- Children's progress in their speaking and communication skills is outstanding. They speak clearly and purposefully to each other in response to teachers' carefully framed questions. They use an increasingly wide and pertinent vocabulary through their role-play and group-time activities. The strong focus on communication skills in both English and in their heritage language ensures that children who speak English as an additional language also thrive.
- Children's early reading and writing skills are very well developed. They learn to recognise writing in the many attractive labels and displays which are regularly referred to throughout the day. They make excellent progress in recognising the relationship between letters and sounds to form words. They identify and write their own names when they register at the start of the sessions or at snack times.
- Children frequently make marks to represent writing on many different surfaces from sand to paper in chalks, felt tips, crayons, pencils and many other media. Many children make rapid progress to levels of writing which are more typically seen well into the Reception class and beyond.
- Children make outstanding progress in their early mathematical skills. They count and order numbers well in a wide range of activities. They make very good progress in recognising written numbers and matching them accurately to the correct number of objects. They make excellent progress in remembering the names of two and three dimensional shapes, such as pentagons and cuboids, and identifying them in the environment around them.

The quality of teaching**is outstanding**

- Teachers make excellent use of accurate assessments of children's progress to set work which enables them to do their best. They make frequent and detailed observations of children's learning in different circumstances and frequently gather information from parents to reinforce these assessments.
- The outstanding quality of teaching has been sustained since the last inspection. All staff are involved in the thorough lesson planning and assessments so that their expectations are consistently high and activities challenge all children to do their best.
- Teachers and other adults ask searching questions to explore children's understanding and develop their thinking skills. They enable children to make a full contribution to activities through, for example, partner talk and group discussions. This successfully reinforces their knowledge and understanding. They involve the children very well in thinking about their own learning and how they can improve it. For example, they make extremely good use of rhymes, songs, labels and catch phrases to remind them to be good listeners and to try hard.
- Reading and mathematical skills are systematically and progressively taught through very carefully targeted group sessions and reinforced and secured through activities children select for themselves. The school is exploring ways to build even more challenging letters and counting activities into the natural environment of the extensive grounds to extend learning further and to act as a model for other Early Years Foundation Stage settings.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs are given work which enables them to make outstanding progress by taking small steps. Teaching assistants and other adults provide sensitive and skilled support when needed whilst encouraging children to work as independently as possible.
- Teachers promote children's independence extremely well. This particularly contributes to the successful achievement by the most-able. All resources are stored in easily accessible and attractive containers both indoors and out with clear labels and photographs of the contents.
- Children are successfully encouraged to make decisions about what they want to use and to tidy up afterwards. From the start they put on their own coats and boots to venture outdoors with minimal assistance from adults.
- Teachers make extremely good use of a wide range of different ways of teaching. They make very good use of information and communication technology to engage and inspire children. For example, by encouraging children to use recording equipment to tell their stories and share ideas.

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

- Children's behaviour is exemplary in the classroom and around school. They respond extremely well to the high standards of care and support they receive. The school tracks every aspect of children's personal development in great detail and is alert to any variations in temperament.
- Children have a very good understanding of how their behaviour affects others and that they should be kind and considerate. Children collaborate extremely well with others and tidy up with enthusiasm. Teachers make excellent use of a wide range of children's literature, songs and rhymes to reinforce positive attitudes and to promote children's health and well-being.
- Children attend the centre regularly and are ready to work. Parents frequently comment on their children's eagerness to come to school and to see their friends and teachers. The school tracks attendance carefully and works closely with families to address any difficulties. This contributes well to their readiness for primary school.
- Teachers work closely with parents to help children settle in to school life quickly and effectively. They help children with social and emotional difficulties to manage and improve their own behaviour by providing a good sense of security and offering specialist support and training when it is needed.
- Well-planned activities relating to family life, babies, schools and people who help us contribute

to the children's security and sense of well-being. Daily feedback to parents helps smooth the very rare occasions when children do not feel as happy as usual.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The head of centre, governors and other leaders are passionate about their school and the children in it. The outstanding leadership of the head of centre, supported extremely effectively by other leaders at all levels, has been highly successful in continuing to maintain and build on the previous outstanding practice. All leaders and staff work together with a clear vision, high expectations and commitment to continuous improvement.
- Leadership roles have evolved and strengthened and new roles created to ensure a secure future for the school. Staff responses are resoundingly positive and praising of the leadership. For instance, one staff member typified the views of others commenting, 'I feel very proud to be part of the family here.'
- The school analyses all aspects of its work thoroughly and acts quickly to address any gaps so that no one becomes complacent and the drive to sustain the school's effectiveness is not slowed. School development plans are sharply focused. Plans to raise achievement are linked to close checks on the quality of teaching, learning and progress and these are shared by leaders and staff in the school.
- Provision for the training of all staff is excellent. All staff are encouraged to develop their skills, including moving on to becoming a qualified teacher as a result of the school's support and encouragement. As a result school leaders are able to consistently focus on maintaining and improving the quality of teaching. The process of setting targets for teachers to improve their performance is rigorous and challenging.
- The school prides itself in giving children opportunities to fulfil their potential and shine in many areas. These are provided through enriching experiences including residential visits with the family and many visitors to the school. The partnerships with many other Early Years Foundation Stage Providers contributes significantly to many aspects of the centre's work and to the rich curriculum the children enjoy so much.
- The school forges extremely strong relationships with parents while their children are in the Nursery. It provides an extensive range of support and training for families to better help with their children's education. In addition, it provides many opportunities for parents to develop themselves, whether it is parenting skills, literacy or numeracy. As a result parents are highly supportive of the school.
- The local authority has supported the school very well through an appropriate light-touch. School leaders have played a significant role in developing high quality practice in many aspects of education throughout the local authority, such as work with disabled children and those with special educational needs, the development of assessment and the mentoring and supporting of new teachers.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors share the head of centre's drive and aspirations for the school and children. Since the last inspection they have worked hard to further develop their own skills and have an excellent understanding of information on children's progress, and use the very latest available to check that all groups are doing as well as each other and that none is disadvantaged. Governors are committed to continually enhancing their own skills and becoming even more rigorous in the checks they make when visiting the school. They ensure that financial resources are efficiently managed and know how this impacts on children's achievement. Governors see that targets to improve the performance of staff are reviewed carefully and that teachers' pay is linked to how well children are doing. They successfully ensure that safeguarding meets statutory requirements and is based on robust record keeping.

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

Unique reference number	106828
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	425722

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	75
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lindsay Pitchley
Head of Centre	Carole Johnson
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2010
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