

Slough Centre Nursery School

Buckingham Avenue East, Slough, Berkshire, SL13EA

Inspection dates 11–12 December 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.

- The nursery's outstanding provision ensures children make an excellent start to their education.
- Children make outstanding progress given their low starting points.
- Children make exceptional progress in all areas of learning because the activities provided for them meet their needs extremely well.
- The nursery excels at ensuring children develop communication and language skills through a multi-layered approach that involves small group work, specific programmes, signing and on-going questioning and dialogue between staff and children.
- Excellent small group provision for children with very little English supports them exceptionally well, both in terms of their confidence and in the development of their spoken English.
- Teaching is outstanding. Staff prepare significantly well for all lessons, ensuring activities are stimulating, challenging and well matched to children's needs and abilities.
- Excellent partnerships with parents ensure they play a vital role in their children's successful learning.
- Excellent twice-daily reviews of teaching and learning ensure staff have a very clear view of the impact of their provision and enables them to plan very specifically for the next steps in children's learning.
- Children with disabilities and special educational needs, including the children in the Autistic Spectrum Disorder Unit, receive high quality teaching and care that enables them to learn successfully.
- Relationships are excellent. Staff are extremely well tuned to children's differing needs so that they promote their learning and well-being extremely well.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Children know staff will take very good care of them, relish the warm caring relationships that enable them to be confident, inquisitive learners.
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. The deputy headteacher and all staff share the headteacher's passion for excellence, as can be seen in all they do to promote children's outstanding learning.
- Governors, many of whom are new, are very well led by the Chair and Vice Chair who are supporting them so that they can challenge the school more effectively.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons or part lessons of which three were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body, six governors ,a local authority representative, the leadership team and other staff.
- They observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including the school’s information on children’s current progress, planning and checks on the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the 20 responses to the online Parent View survey. They also spoke to several parents when they brought their children to school and took account of the 26 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Janet Sinclair, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Gary Kirkley	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Slough Centre Nursery is an above-average-sized nursery school.
- There is a small unit for children with autistic spectrum disorder attached to the school.
- The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of children supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of children from minority ethnic groups is high, a large proportion of whom are at an early stage of learning to speak English. Twenty-one different languages are spoken in the school.
- Children start in the nursery the term after their third birthday and most leave in the August prior to their fifth birthday, although they can stay until the term after they are five-years-old.
- There are two sessions per day: 8.30am to 11.30am and 12.30pm to 3.30pm, five days a week. A small number of children have a packed lunch at the school each day.
- The nursery entered into a hard federation with another nursery school in Slough in April 2013. The headteacher is executive headteacher of both schools. A new governing body was reconstituted at that time.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop the skills of new governors so that they give support, provide challenge and strengthen school leadership more effectively.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children start in the nursery with skills and abilities well below those expected for their age, and very low in communication and language. They make outstanding progress across the areas of learning so that most reach or exceed the expected levels for their age.
- The school carefully checks on children's progress, so that any not doing well enough are quickly identified and support is put in place to help them catch up. This ensures all children make good progress across the areas of learning and most make outstanding progress. This promotes equality of opportunity and tackles possible discrimination.
- Children with disabilities and special educational needs do extremely well due to the outstanding leadership of the special educational needs coordinator who ensures provision for them is extremely well tailored to their individual needs through a range of highly effective interventions.
- Children in the Autistic Spectrum Disorder Unit benefit from highly specialised care that supports them extremely well and promotes successful learning.
- Children at an early stage of learning English are supported extremely well in developing their language skills because staff across the school work tirelessly to promote children's confident speaking skills through using highly effective spoken communication themselves with the children and the regular use of signing to underline meaning.
- Children enjoy mark making and use it throughout their work in the nursery, for example when writing or drawing what they would like for Christmas or writing letters to Father Christmas. The many opportunities provided help children to develop their early writing skills effectively through purposeful, well-planned activities.
- Children build accurate counting skills because of the very wide range of exciting activities promoted, such as fishing for numbered fish or singing songs such as 'Five little ducks'.
- Children's physical skills develop successfully as the children ride wheeled vehicles with good coordination and control and climb on the apparatus safely. They learn to manipulate materials, including handling hammers and nails, with confidence.
- They develop their understanding of the world thorough, for example, celebrating events such as Diwali and Eid, and using magnets and paper telescopes to view the world from a different perspective.
- Through role play, music and art, children make very good gains in their creative and expressive development. They use musical instruments to make loud and quiet sounds, decorate baubles to hang on the Christmas tree and make their own Christmas cards.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Outstanding teaching, over time, has ensured the nursery continues to provide education of the highest quality for the children in its care and nurtures their excellent attitudes to learning.
- All staff have an excellent understanding of how children of this age learn and plan exciting, challenging activities that meet the varying needs of the children exceptionally well.
- Excellent indoor and outdoor activities, well staffed by adults who interact very well with the children, meet their needs extremely well and ensure high levels of engagement that promote rapid progress.
- Staff challenge more able children effectively through well-planned activities that stretch them and extend their knowledge and skills.
- A particularly strong feature of teaching is the way that all staff meet in their base groups after the morning and afternoon sessions to review and evaluate the success of activities and children's involvement in them and to plan next steps for their learning. This ensures that highly effective learning takes place.
- The nursery staff ensure an environment that is rich in language. As a result, children thoroughly

enjoy listening to stories, love singing rhymes and are enjoying Christmas songs such as 'When Santa got stuck up the chimney'.

- Children listen to, and practise saying, different sounds through, for example, 'alliteration soup' where they pick objects from a pot that all begin with the same sound. This and similar activities prepare them well for later, more formal, learning of letters and the sounds they make (phonics).
- Teachers provide interesting events, such as the 'Voyage to see Santa' staged in the outdoor area, with exciting experiences on their way until they finally meet Santa in his tree house. This, in turn, prompts huge enthusiasm for writing letters to Santa.
- Teaching is strongly aimed at ensuring children develop their spoken English rapidly, for example through ongoing high quality dialogue in the café where the children have their snacks, and effective use of programmes such as 'Talk for Writing'.
- Teaching of children with disabilities or special needs, including those in the unit with autistic spectrum disorder, is highly skilled and positive, and enables the children to be integrated into the nursery, as well as providing individual support as appropriate.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Children behave extremely well. Behaviour remains outstanding, as it was found to be at the time of the previous inspection. Children work and play alongside each other extremely well, know what is expected of them and are keen to follow routines and obey the rules.
- Excellent induction arrangements, including weekly visits for the term before they start, help children to settle quickly as they are familiar with the nursery routines.
- Children are polite and well mannered, show a keen interest in their surroundings, and are eager to communicate with each other and all adults. They learn quickly to take turns and relate extremely well to each other. This is because staff are excellent role models.
- Children make exceptional progress in their personal and social development, due to the extremely positive learning environment created by all staff, clear expectations and very caring relationships.
- Children have very good attitudes to their learning. They are very keen to take part and show perseverance, curiosity and huge enthusiasm.
- Lunchtimes are calm and well organised, and packed lunches are healthy. This contributes well to children's behaviour and well-being.
- The school ensures children are kept very safe, with appropriate safeguarding procedures and clear policies in place. Children learn about staying safe, for example when crossing the road and through having to wear high visibility jackets on school trips.
- Children's outstanding behaviour contributes extremely well to their exceptional learning. Adults manage the children very well and any minor lapses in behaviour are dealt with very quickly.
- All policies and procedures are in place to ensure children's safety, and there are no recorded incidents of bullying or racism.
- Almost all of the parents who responded to the online Parent View survey, and those spoken to during the inspection, agree that there are no issues with behaviour or bullying and their children are safe in school. School staff are fully in agreement. Inspection evidence confirms these views are accurate.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher provides exceptional leadership and has done so over a good number of years. She is very well supported by her deputy headteacher who assumes responsibility for the school when the headteacher is at the other nursery in the federation.
- Although outstanding at its previous inspection, the school has continued to improve and extend its overall provision. It successfully closes attainment gaps between different groups through

exceptional teaching and very careful checks on children's progress. This indicates that there is capacity for further improvement.

- Staff work extremely well together as a team and are fully committed to maintaining the school's outstanding provision through hard work and continuing professional development.
- The school has an accurate view of its performance. The school development plan is clearly set out to ensure key areas for development are tackled effectively. Governors and senior staff are involved in checking progress on a regular basis to ensure achievement is maintained at the high levels expected.
- Leaders have a clear view of teaching quality and regularly check to ensure its very high quality is maintained. All staff are keen to improve their teaching wherever needed through, for example, observing each other and reviewing videos of their performance.
- All staff have their performance regularly assessed and targets are set to ensure high standards are maintained. Training is regularly undertaken, as well as involvement in new projects such as the recent Well-being and Involvement project that monitors, in particular, the involvement of 'quiet children' in activities.
- The curriculum is rich and well planned. It meets the needs of the children extremely well and ensures full equality of opportunity.
- The promotion of the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Children from different cultures learn and develop together extremely well due to the very caring and supportive school community. Children are fascinated by the world around them, know right from wrong and enjoy working together.
- There are excellent links with parents who feel very well informed about their child's progress and appreciate the newsletters that give them an excellent picture of what is happening in the school. Parents say that they feel very welcome in school and appreciated the recent workshop on valuing children's home language.
- The school receives light touch support from the local authority, but takes advantage of the many courses provided for staff to widen their skills and expertise.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Although many of the governors are new, they have worked extremely hard to ensure they support and challenge the school, but have not been in place long enough to fully hold the school to account. Governors have a good knowledge of the quality of teaching and learning through the headteacher's reports and visits to school to find out for themselves. They ensure that children and staff are kept safe through effective safeguarding procedures and have instigated a daily safety check in all classes. They have a good knowledge of the school's finances, and know how well children are doing due to the effective checks on their progress. Governors have undertaken a great deal of training in order to develop their knowledge and skills as quickly as possible. They are involved in setting targets for the management of the headteacher's performance and know that there is a similar process in place for staff. They ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met.

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	109760
Local authority	Slough
Inspection number	426412

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	124
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Redman-Brown
Headteacher	Diane Lister
Date of previous school inspection	2 December 2010
Telephone number	01753 521975
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Email address	office@slough-nursery.slough.sch.uk

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