

Tenterfield Nursery School

London Road, Welwyn, AL6 9JF

Inspection dates 27–28 February 2014

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.

- Achievement is outstanding because a high proportion of the children make rapid progress in their learning. Children move on to primary school with skills that are above those typically found for their age.
- As a result of the excellent support provided, disabled children and those who have special educational needs make outstanding progress.
- Children develop the ability to concentrate for long periods of time and become confident learners. As a result, they are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Children's behaviour is outstanding and they get on very well together. For their age, children have a detailed knowledge about what they need to do to stay safe.
- Teaching is outstanding: much of it is excellent and it is always at least good.
- The headteacher and assistant headteacher provide outstanding leadership. This has enabled the nursery to continue to build on the outstanding effectiveness, achievement and teaching found at the previous inspection.
- The governing body has a clear awareness of the school's work and makes an effective contribution to its development.
- Parents who expressed their views are delighted with the work of the nursery and the effect it has on their children's progress.
- The nursery provides children with a wide range of experiences that usually support their learning exceptionally well. Senior leaders have begun to identify ways to make sure that learning is always of the same high quality.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector made 29 observations of learning where the teacher, Early Years Foundation Stage practitioners and other staff led activities for groups of children and where they chose activities for themselves. She also observed an assembly and a session led by a group of visiting drumming group.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and assistant headteacher, and with the Chair and vice chair of the Governing Body. A telephone discussion took place with a representative of the local authority. Informal discussions took place with several individual children about their work.
- The inspector took into account the 31 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke with a small number of parents when they collected their children. Eleven questionnaires completed by members of staff were also considered.
- The inspector looked at the nursery's work and at documentation, including leaders' evaluation of the nursery's effectiveness, the development plan, information relating to safeguarding, records of children's attainment and progress, and at their learning journals which record individual children's achievements (known as special learning books).

Inspection team

Margaret Goodchild, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Children attend the nursery part time for five half-day sessions a week. Most join in September and have three terms in the nursery before moving on to primary school. A small number of children who are likely to benefit from spending longer in the nursery are admitted in January, and have five terms there.
- Most children come from White British backgrounds. Only a small proportion of the children speak English as an additional language although several different home languages are spoken.
- The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs supported through early action is below average. The proportion supported through early action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The nursery provides childcare in the form of a breakfast club, wraparound care, a tea club and a holiday club. It is also the lead agency for Tenterfield Children's Centre, which is located on the same site. The childcare and the children's centre are registered separately from the nursery and both are subject to separate inspections.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the range of learning experiences available to the children is constantly of the same high quality by:
 - always making full use of the wealth of toys, equipment and other learning resources to support their development
 - checking that the member of staff who is in charge in the indoor and outdoor areas at any given time takes responsibility for overseeing the quality of learning of all the children.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- When children join the nursery, their skills and knowledge are below those typically found for their age, particularly in personal, social and emotional development, communication and language, mathematics and expressive arts and design.
- Children's achievement is outstanding and they develop skills that are above those typically found for their age by the time they move on to primary school. All children make at least good progress and the majority do exceptionally well.
- All the children make outstanding progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Children have excellent attitudes to learning and develop a wide range of personal skills that underpin their progress in other areas of learning. These skills mean that children are extremely well prepared for further learning when they move on to primary school.
- Children make outstanding progress in developing their communication and language skills because staff take every opportunity to talk to them about what they are doing. Children make rapid progress in widening their vocabulary, and they readily talk about their experiences with adults and one another. The emphasis on communication helps to ensure that children who speak English as an additional language continuously learn and understand new words, which helps them to make similar progress to their classmates.
- Regular involvement in Forest School activities, where the children spend time learning and playing in a woodland setting, enables them to develop a range of physical skills and find out about nature and wildlife at first hand. This contributes greatly to their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Children make at least good progress in other areas of learning. They all quickly find their name cards when they arrive at the beginning of a session, and they are developing an increasing amount of control in holding a pencil and making marks. Some children can already write their names and use their knowledge of the sounds that letters represent to write some other words. Children enjoy books, listen carefully to stories, are often able to predict what might happen next, and retell familiar tales.
- Children have many opportunities to learn to count as part of everyday activities, and they are beginning to recognise and match numbers. They learn about geometric shapes and their properties, often through building and playing with construction equipment. They explore capacity and measurement, for example, by tipping sand and water into containers of different sizes.
- More-able children make rapid progress and the attainment of a small number of children is far in advance of that normally found for their age. For instance, these children are able to read accurately and fluently and write a series of sentences using full stops and capital letters. Their understanding of numbers is much greater than expectations for their age and they are able to estimate quantities, for example, suggesting that when there are many items, there might be 'a hundred or even a thousand'.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs make outstanding progress. This is because the nursery is quick to identify their difficulties, and staff work very closely with their parents and with other agencies to develop support programmes precisely matched to their

needs.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Much of the teaching is outstanding and it is always at least good, with some that is exemplary. Teaching has an outstanding effect on children's attitudes because staff instil in them a love of learning and a belief that they will succeed if they try hard. This results in a very purposeful atmosphere where children quickly settle to activities and become confident learners.
- Teaching engages children because activities are not too easy and not too difficult, and are often made extremely motivating. The children are currently enthralled at the question of 'who lives behind the door' and are avidly writing letters to 'the elves'. During the inspection, they also became deeply interested in the story of *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* because it was brought to life by a visiting drumming group who involved them in creating a musical retelling of the story. Children's enthusiasm then spilled over into imaginative role play and a range of other activities, skilfully supported by the staff.
- The teaching of disabled children and those who have special educational needs is outstanding. The school employs a speech and language therapist for a day each week and this makes an excellent contribution to the knowledge of all the staff. It means that they are highly knowledgeable in working with children with speech and language difficulties, and are very skilled in the promotion of all children's communication and language development.
- A key strength in all the teaching is the way staff question the children and talk with them at depth about what they are doing. This develops children's thinking and problem solving, and greatly extends their speaking and listening skills. In-depth discussions support and encourage those who need extra help, and do much to stimulate and challenge the learning of more-able children.
- Staff have a thorough knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage and of how young children learn. They work very effectively as a team, regularly meeting to discuss children's progress and to plan future activities. Sessions promote children's development across the different areas of learning and provide plenty of opportunities for them to develop their literacy and mathematical skills.
- By working with local Reception class teachers, the nursery has ensured assessment is accurate, and all the staff contribute to detailed observations of children's attainment, identifying just what they need to learn next to build on their existing understanding. The nursery shares learning targets with children and their parents each term, and staff talk to children about how well they are working towards their targets. This helps to raise children's awareness about their own learning so that they take pride in their achievements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of the children is outstanding. They display excellent attitudes and an obvious enthusiasm for learning. Staff are highly skilled in bringing out the best in the children so that they feel valued and want to cooperate. Records show that inappropriate behaviour is very rare and is quickly dealt with.
- Children talk excitedly about the photographs in their special learning books showing the things they have done. They concentrate for long periods of time and persevere with their tasks exceptionally well. They learn and play harmoniously together and get on very well with one

another. High quality relationships and close supervision by staff mean that there have been no recorded incidents of bullying: children learn to be kind and supportive to one another.

- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is outstanding. Children enjoy trusting relationships with the adults who work with them and parents are confident that the nursery keeps their children safe.
- Children have a very detailed knowledge for their age of how to keep themselves safe. They know why it is necessary to wear goggles when they are using the work bench. They know what happens if the fire bell sounds and what this means. They know it is important to remember to wear a helmet when riding on a tricycle, and why it is essential to wash their hands after going to the toilet and before eating.
- The nursery works closely with parents and other agencies to encourage regular attendance and nearly all the children have a good attendance record.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher and the assistant headteacher work extremely well together and provide outstanding leadership. They involve all members of the nursery in school development, and they communicate high expectations to staff, children and parents. There is a strong culture of continuous improvement and all the staff take an active part in working to keep the nursery outstanding. As a result, leaders have sustained and built on the strengths found at the previous inspection.
- Leaders carry out careful checks on all aspects of the nursery's work and draw on their evaluation of its effectiveness to produce detailed action plans. The leadership of teaching is strong and all the staff have excellent opportunities to develop their skills through training. Teachers observe one another at work, and the coaching of less experienced staff has led to an increase in the amount of teaching that is outstanding.
- There are rigorous systems for managing the performance of staff. Senior leaders provide staff with precise guidance after observing their teaching, and regular meetings between the headteacher and key workers focus on the amount of progress children have made. Leaders thoroughly analyse information about children's progress to see where any child needs additional help and to make sure all groups have equal opportunities so that there is no discrimination.
- The nursery works extremely well in partnership with others. Seamless working between the nursery, the children's centre staff and the wraparound childcare goes a long way in supporting children and their families. Nursery staff work very closely with the nearby primary school and senior leaders have recently been helping to lead another nursery school in the local authority.
- Communication with parents is strong and staff work closely to involve them as active partners in their children's learning. Increasing numbers of parents volunteer in the nursery, and those parents who expressed their views are highly satisfied with the way the nursery supports their children's development.
- The nursery provides children with a wide range of experiences indoors and in the spacious outdoor area. Activities span all the areas of learning and special events, such as creativity week, trips to the theatre and regular Forest School activities, motivate the children and contribute to their enthusiasm for learning. The nursery promotes children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well, including through the celebration of a range of world

festivals.

- Learning opportunities usually support children’s development exceptionally well. At times, however, the wealth of toys, equipment and other learning resources is not used as fully as possible to promote children’s learning. When this happens, whoever is in charge in the indoor and outdoor areas does not always check that all the children are learning as well as they could be. Senior leaders have identified this issue, and have begun to develop the leadership role of members of staff to take more responsibility so that learning is always of the same high quality.
- The local authority is well informed about the nursery’s work and makes a good contribution to its development. Regular visits by the authority provide support and challenge for senior leaders and the nursery has benefited, for example, from support in developing systems for carefully tracking children’s progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body makes a good contribution to school improvement and has a clear understanding of the nursery’s work. Individual members of the governing body bring valuable skills to their role. They share the headteacher’s vision for building on the nursery’s very positive track record, and regularly challenge senior leaders to explain information or justify decisions. Governors know what assessment data show about children’s progress, and individual governors have attended progress meetings between the headteacher and members of staff. Through focused visits to the school and analysing information, the governing body is able to form its own view of the nursery’s effectiveness. Governors are able to talk about the quality of teaching and they make sure that staff pay is linked to performance and to the progress of the children. Financial management is strong and governors ensure statutory requirements are met, including those for the safeguarding of children.

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	117078
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	430753

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	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Blackburn
Headteacher	Hannah Isher
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2011
Telephone number	01438 714564
Fax number	01438 716347
Email address	admin@tenterfield.herts.sch.uk

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