

# New Bridge Nursery School

Montague Street, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5AU

## Inspection dates

8–9 July 2014

|                                |                      |                    |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------|
| <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.

- Exceptional leadership, outstanding care and high quality teaching have continued to secure excellent achievement for all children.
- Adults are highly qualified and very skilled at planning creative, imaginative and exciting activities across all areas of learning. Children are fully engaged at all times because their individual needs and interests are planned for especially well.
- A high emphasis is placed upon children's personal, social and emotional development, communication and language and physical skills in their first term. This ensures that children acquire these skills rapidly and quickly become confident in the setting.
- Children who find learning difficult are exceptionally well supported. Provision in the Snowflake Centre, for children diagnosed with autism, is exemplary, enabling them to join in activities with all other children on a daily basis.
- Children behave exceptionally well because of the very strong emphasis on being kind and gentle. They thoroughly enjoy playing together for extended periods of time and are happy and cooperative learners.
- An extremely safe and caring setting means that children feel very secure and love to attend the nursery.
- Partnerships with parents are exceptional. They are full of praise for the nursery and highly recommend it. They say, 'It is a wonderful place!'
- The daily Little Munchers Lunch Club and the Saturday Family Man Club are very popular and add significantly to children's learning experiences.
- The key to the nursery's success is the inspirational leadership of the headteacher and her consistent drive to secure excellent provision for all children. She is very ably supported by an experienced and motivated leadership team. Together with skilled governors, they constantly evaluate the work of the nursery. This has built a strong whole school team fully committed to further improvement.
- The nursery provides a model of excellence for other nurseries within the locality. Excellent relationships with local primary schools ensure a very smooth transition to Reception for all children.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed children playing and learning in a wide range of activities, including those led by adults and some chosen by the children. All practitioners were observed during morning and afternoon sessions, including lunchtime. The inspector was sometimes accompanied by the headteacher and her deputy.
- The inspector talked with children about their activities and looked at displays and records of their work.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including systems for checking children's' progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures and the school's analysis of how well it is doing and how it plans to improve. Records of checks made on the quality of teaching and the minutes of the governing body meetings were also examined.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body and the school staff. A meeting took place with a school adviser from the local authority.
- The inspector spoke to parents and carers when they brought their children to the nursery in the morning or afternoon and took account of 41 responses to the online survey, Parent View. Questionnaires completed by 18 members of staff were also considered.

## Inspection team

Anna Sketchley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- New Bridge Nursery is larger in size than most nurseries nationally. Children start when they reach their third birthday and stay for three, four or five terms until they transfer to Reception in their chosen primary school.
- Children attend for either five mornings or five afternoons each week during term time. As they become familiar with the setting, they are offered an extra session enabling them to stay for a whole day once a week. On this day they are offered a hot meal at lunchtime.
- The nursery has a special resource provision for children diagnosed with autism. It is known as the Snowflake Centre and children attend for either five mornings or five afternoons. As they also become familiar with the setting, they are offered an extra session enabling them to stay for a whole day once a week. On this day they too are offered a hot meal at lunchtime.
- New Bridge Nursery is federated with another local nursery that has been subject to a separate inspection. Both nurseries are led by the executive headteacher.
- The proportion of disabled children and those with special educational needs supported through Early Years Action is above that found in most schools. The proportion supported at Early Years Action Plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is also above that found in most schools. There are no comparative figures for nursery schools.
- A high proportion of children speak English as an additional language. Twelve different languages are spoken. A very small number of children are in the early stages of learning English.

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

- Ensure children always have the best opportunities to make rapid progress by checking that all the characteristics of effective learning are regularly included in daily planning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Children join the nursery with various levels of knowledge, skills and understanding. Many are well below the levels typical for their age. They make rapid progress, especially in their communication and language skills and personal and physical development. By the time they leave the nursery the majority reach a good level of development across all areas of learning. A significant proportion exceeds the level expected for their age.
- Children and parents are very warmly welcomed by adults at the beginning of each session. Children quickly find their name, identify the initial sound and put it in the correct pocket. Exceptionally well-prepared creative activities, such as flour in the water tray, engage them immediately. Children expertly fetch and add water and colour, mixing and feeling the different textures, extending their language skills as they talk about it feeling 'gloopy'.
- Children settle quickly and easily because excellent routines mean they rapidly develop the confidence to choose their own activities. Exceptionally well-planned and equally well-resourced indoor and outdoor areas significantly enrich children's development. They are actively encouraged to have a go at mark making and writing, practise counting, and find numbers in the sand. They show great concentration as they enjoy a variety of activities. These include doing puzzles, looking at books, or working with modelling materials. They are also skilful at constructing models and painting pictures. There is an excellent range of stimulating activities on offer. The children become self-assured and independent and move purposefully between the different areas.
- Two different outdoor gardens provide many exciting opportunities across all areas of learning. Children strengthen their muscles and develop their control and balance as they climb the wooden structure, swing on the rope and ride on wheeled toys. When asked what they enjoy most, children told the inspector, 'We love the garden!'
- Central to the excellent progress children make is the emphasis on their personal, social and emotional skills, helping them develop good attitudes to learning and towards one another. They sing songs together regularly throughout the session. The words remind them to be kind and gentle, to share and take turns and to help tidy up. Little Munchers Lunch Club involves them in a valuable social setting where the children make choices about what they would like to eat. They learn important self-help skills such as clearing their own plates.
- There is an effective emphasis on developing children's communication and language skills. Adults talk to children continuously, explaining what they are doing, joining in the children's activities, asking questions, and extending children's vocabulary. In this way, children develop their language skills and quickly learn to talk in sentences.
- Child-chosen activities are very well planned across an uninterrupted period of time. Very carefully planned small group activities mean that the needs of all children are fully met. Children develop good attitudes to learning within the small groups. This helps their excellent progress and prepares them exceptionally well for the future.
- More-able children demonstrated this as they listened very carefully while learning the sounds that letters make. They eagerly threw an enormous die marked with letters. They showed how they could blend sounds to make words such as 'snap', acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding beyond that typical for their age.
- Children with a range of complex learning needs, including those in the early stages of learning English, receive very effective support. Adults are skilled at implementing the special advice from other professionals. Children's progress is rigorously checked and the children make rapid progress.
- The Snowflake Centre provides extremely strong support and sensory experiences for children diagnosed with autism. As a result, they make exceptional progress. The skills, care and patience of highly trained adults enable these children to integrate calmly with all the other children on a daily basis. The centre is highly valued by parents.

**The quality of teaching is outstanding**

- Adults plan together in considerable detail for each week, making very good use of their knowledge about children's own interests. Staff discuss how well children are progressing; detailed information is collected, noted and used to plan the next steps for each individual child.
- Observations and photographs of each child's individual progress are carefully recorded in their learning journeys and parents are invited to contribute to these important milestones.
- The nursery is introducing a daily check to ensure that there is a good balance of opportunities provided for all the characteristics of effective learning. This is to enable children to make even greater progress, but has yet to be fully used.
- Adult-led activities are stimulating, challenging and active, encouraging children to have a go and persevere.
- A large group of children were completely focused as they worked with adults in a game using the parachute. The children rose to the tough challenge to work together to roll the ball in the parachute so that it disappeared through a hole in the centre. They demonstrated a high level of perseverance and fascination.
- Adults use a variety of ways to probe children's understanding. Excellent opportunities are taken to practise letters and sounds and counting during other activities such as story time. Children who might sometimes be reluctant to join in are skilfully involved.
- Children concentrate really well and listen carefully because of the excellent relationships and high expectations of adults. This helps them to make significant progress during the short, small group learning times.
- Excellent opportunities exist for children to play and explore their surroundings together. During this period of uninterrupted time, adults join in sensitively, following children's ideas. Children are encouraged to try new experiences and praised for their efforts.
- Parents are supported exceptionally well by a weekly newsletter that explains what the focus will be for learning the following week. Parents remarked positively, saying how pleased they were to receive it because it showed them how they could help their child's learning at home.

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

- The behaviour of children is outstanding. School records over time, views expressed in the online parent questionnaire and informal discussions with parents confirm this view. No child has been prevented from attending the nursery because of poor behaviour.
- Direct teaching about how to behave towards one another fully supports children's social development. The 'kind hands' song underpins the strong messages children are given about being kind and gentle to one another. They play exceptionally happily together because they are taught how to take turns and share by, for example, using a large sand timer. They delight in helping and respond very sensibly when it is time to tidy away.
- No opportunities are missed to develop children's personal skills. Snack and lunch times provide excellent social occasions. Children are fully involved in making choices, distributing the snack, taking part in conversations about their day and learning to say please and thank you. They sit at their tables nicely, using a knife and fork and show good manners. As a result, children's personal development is very strong. They attend the nursery very regularly because they thoroughly enjoy all that is made available.
- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is outstanding. There are no recorded incidents of bullying or racism. Children say they feel very safe and the views of parents agree. There are many opportunities for children to assess and manage risks whilst engaged in the nursery's adventurous activities.

**The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The experienced and inspirational headteacher is totally dedicated to ensuring that all children make the best possible progress. Her drive and ambition, combined with very good support from senior leaders and governors, have enabled her to develop a strong nursery team. They are wholly committed to constantly pursuing excellence. As a result, the nursery has the capacity to continue to secure outstanding provision and outcomes for all children.
- Through regular checks on the quality of teaching and the progress children make over time, there is accurate information about what the nursery needs to do next. The whole school community is involved in determining the correct priorities for development. These are supported by very comprehensive action plans.
- All staff are set demanding individual targets that are reviewed regularly. Training needs are rapidly provided where necessary. Opportunities for professional development are highly valued and often take place for the whole staff.
- Teachers and Early Years Foundation Stage practitioners meet regularly in teams for reflective discussions. They engage in professional dialogue and healthy challenging questions that drive forward further improvement.
- The areas of learning are organised, considered and taught very well. Due to children's needs when they join the nursery, a high focus is placed on language, physical and personal, social and emotional development during their first term. This ensures that children are well prepared and ready for the next stage in their education when they transfer to primary school.
- During the inspection, parents were keen to speak personally to the inspector to give their views. They were overwhelmingly positive and value the work of the nursery very highly indeed. They especially mentioned the care taken to ensure that children make a smooth transition to their Reception year.
- Partnerships with other nurseries and parents are outstanding. Parents fully appreciate all that is done to help them to become true partners in their child's education. Of particular note is the Saturday Family Man Club that enables any male members of the family to come and enjoy a very special time with their child. It is supported exceptionally well. The local authority recognises the high quality of the nursery's work by offering only light touch support. It uses the nursery as an example of excellent practice.
- Equal opportunities for different groups of children are promoted well and the nursery does not tolerate any form of discrimination. Children are exceptionally well cared for and the governing body and the school staff make sure that safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously to fully meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have many extremely useful skills from the world of work and use these together with specific governor training to ensure that they support the school at every opportunity. They are very well organised and check upon the work of the school carefully through reports and visits. As a result, they are very knowledgeable about its performance. This enables them to ask challenging questions in relation to how well the nursery is performing. They ensure that funding is used to maximum benefit and that staff pay and the progress children make are carefully compared and considered to secure good value for money. The headteacher is set rigorous targets that are checked regularly throughout the year. They are reviewed annually with the help of an external consultant. Governors carry out their duties very diligently.

## 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> | 109752  |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Reading |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 431046  |

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>                     | Maintained                            |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–5                                   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                 |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 125                                   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                    |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Emma Tear                             |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Lisa Bedlow                           |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 16–17 March 2011                      |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 0118 9375580                          |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01189 375580                          |
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