

Lillian de Lissa Nursery School

Bellevue, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B5 7LX

Inspection dates

15–16 October 2014

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- This is a warm and friendly school where everyone is welcomed and valued. The whole staff are committed to ensuring the children and their families are at the centre of everything they do.
- Ably supported by the deputy headteacher and the governing body, the headteacher has ensured that teaching and children's achievement are improving.
- Excellent partnerships exist with parents, who are extremely well supported to engage with their children's learning. They have every confidence in the school to keep their children safe.
- Teaching is good. Staff know the children well and have an excellent understanding of how children learn.
- Children are excited and enthusiastic learners. They eagerly play by themselves. They know the routines and what is expected when a teacher is leading an activity.
- Very strong, effective partnerships exist with other agencies, including the children's centre. This ensures that all children get the support they need at the earliest opportunity, even before they start school.
- The nursery provides high-quality support and teaching for disabled children and those who have special educational needs. The skilled staff ensure these children are extremely well prepared to move forward with their learning when they leave.
- The school promotes children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development outstandingly well. They successfully learn to share and take turns. They respect each other and members of staff, and regularly participate in festivals and celebrations of many different faiths.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The assessments of what children can do have not always previously been entirely accurate.
- Despite their good progress, not enough children reach or exceed the levels of development typical for their age before moving on to the next stage in their education.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven sessions across the school, including one jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the governors, a representative from the local authority, and staff.
- The inspector looked at a number of documents including the school improvement plan, the school's own review of its performance, data on children's progress and planning records. He also checked records of the work of the governing body, reports on teaching, and documentation relating to behaviour and safeguarding.
- The inspector looked at a sample of children's work, focused on the learning experiences of a number of children, and looked at displays around the building.
- As there were no responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the inspector took into consideration the school's own parental questionnaire and interviewed nine parents.
- The inspector took into account the views expressed by the staff in the 18 questionnaires they returned.

Inspection team

Geoffrey Dorrity, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Lillian de Lissa is an average-sized nursery school. It offers 121 part-time equivalent places. Currently 49 children are full time and 23 part time.
- There is provision for 20 two-year-olds which is registered separately and does not form part of this inspection.
- Virtually all children speak English as an additional language, with a large majority beginning school with very limited English language.
- At 5%, the proportion of children supported through early years action is average. The proportion of children supported at early years action or with a statement of special educational needs is 10%. This is also average.
- No children are eligible for the pupil premium due to their age.
- The school hosts a designated children's centre. This is subject to a separate inspection and does not form part of this inspection.
- The school is an Early Years Teaching Centre and is designated as a National School of Creativity and an Arts Connect Hub School.
- The headteacher leads the Early Years Network in the area, working alongside the private and voluntary providers to share best practice.
- The headteacher is Chairperson of the Birmingham Nursery Headteachers Network and represents this group at local authority level as well as regionally and nationally.
- Since the previous inspection, a new deputy headteacher has been appointed, and the school has created the position of business manager.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of children reaching and exceeding the levels of development typical for their age by the time they leave the nursery by:
 - monitoring the assessments made by staff to ensure that they remain accurate
 - making sure that all children have the opportunity to contribute to discussions in order to develop their language and understanding.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders are determined to ensure that the children develop the skills, curiosity and resilience that will give them a strong foundation beyond the nursery school. The aspirations of the headteacher and governors are shared by all the staff. These are focused on building on the previously good achievement so that children make more rapid gains in their learning.
- The setting of targets for staff and training is linked closely to the nursery's priorities and shared with governors. It has helped to ensure that children's achievement is improving.
- Staff are supported to attend additional training in how young children learn. This contributes strongly to the progress of the children.
- The recently appointed deputy headteacher is beginning to make an impact on the effectiveness of the nursery. For instance, leaders identified that assessments had not previously been entirely accurate and the deputy headteacher has introduced sharper procedures and made sure that staff are confident in using them. Staff now have a much clearer and more-accurate picture of what each child can do, both when they start and when they leave the nursery. This is beginning to help the staff and the school to identify how to further improve achievement and ensure more rapid progress.
- The nursery's own evaluation accurately addresses strengths and areas for development in order to improve further the outcomes for all the children in its care.
- Parents highly praise the nursery. They know their children are happy, settled and ready to learn. They comment particularly on their children's progress in reading and numeracy, as well as in developing social skills. They greatly appreciate the advice and guidance they receive about how they can support their children's learning at home.
- Children are excited by and thoroughly enjoy their learning. The areas taught, and the environment created, both indoors and outside, underpin all aspects of children's development well.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, and it covers all areas of learning. Many activities encourage British values of tolerance and understanding. The excellent use of traditional stories and rhymes of British and ethnic heritage gives the children a shared cultural knowledge from which to develop their understanding.
- A wide range of trips and visits supports learning especially well. These are typical of how children are helped to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, children visited the supermarket to buy ingredients for cooking. They developed their understanding of aspects of the changing seasons through close observation and recording of seed heads.
- The school consistently promotes equality of opportunity, fosters good relationships and tackles discrimination. Children and their families have made a display about their backgrounds and each others' identities. This, alongside other work about themselves, effectively supports the development of their self-esteem.
- The headteacher and staff share their expertise and approach with colleagues in other schools and providers locally and more widely. The local authority values this as support for other early years settings and providers. The local authority has a light-touch approach to supporting the school because the authority identifies the nursery as being well run and successful.
- Safeguarding practices fully meet national requirements. Senior leaders, governors and staff have undertaken additional training with regard to child protection and preventing radicalisation, over and above the statutory training. Staff are fully aware and understand the procedures they need to follow, and have used what they have learnt to improve their practice in keeping children safe.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors bring a range of skills and experience that are relevant to the work of the school. Parents are well represented. Minutes show that governors check priorities in the school development plan and ask important questions. They regularly receive analysis of data regarding children’s performance. As a result, they are able to provide a good balance of support and challenge to the headteacher. They spend time in the school and have regular monitoring visits, each of which has a specific focus. The governor with responsibility for disabled children and those who have special educational needs has fortnightly meetings with the deputy headteacher to check on the children’s progress. The governors seek training to ensure that they are up to date and they seek guidance from the local authority when setting targets for the headteacher. They are informed about the quality of teaching and have policies that make clear how the work of staff is rewarded and underperformance would be addressed. Governors have undertaken safeguarding training over and above that which is required to ensure safeguarding requirements are met.

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

- The behaviour of children is outstanding. Children have excellent attitudes to learning and are absorbed for long periods of time in their chosen activities. Adults spend time making sure that children know how to develop good relationships, show consideration for each other and resolve any conflicts which may arise. Every parent spoken to identified that their children had quickly and effectively developed their social skills in the short time they had been coming to the nursery.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs are skilfully supported in taking a full part in all the nursery has to offer. Space, resources and activities are designed to enable all children to take part.
- Children greatly enjoy coming to nursery. Parents state how, when they pick their children up at the end of the day or session, the children are absolutely full of what they have been doing.
- Any absence is instantly followed up on that day, with the result that attendance is showing a marked improvement and is now in line with other nurseries.

Safety

- The school’s work to keep children safe and secure is outstanding. Parents commented on how safe they and their children were in the building. All adults are checked coming into the building, and internal and external doors have locking devices, which are out of children’s reach, so children are kept safe.
- All those adults who regularly come into contact with the children are checked as to their suitability and are monitored as appropriate.
- The success of the school can be noted in the fact that there are no incidents of bullying or racial harassment. Neither are there any incidents of derogatory language.
- All staff have received additional training in awareness of how to prevent radicalisation, and have put their learning into practice.
- Children learn to assess and manage taking risks in a safe environment. Examples include using the climbing frame, playing in the mud kitchen using tools correctly, or climbing in the trees in the outdoor area.

The quality of teaching is good

- Staff discuss how well children are doing, and change plans and activities to meet children’s changing needs and interests. As children develop their understanding, then staff set a more complex challenge. For

example, children were experimenting with the flow of water down an aqueduct, and compared this with the flow of conkers. The following day, the same basic resources were available but staff now included a more complex aqueduct, so children had to predict which way the water or conkers would flow.

- Children learn well because adults join in their play sensitively, following children's ideas, posing questions and extending their language. For instance, when playing in the outdoor shelter, children used their imagination to make it into a bus stop. Staff then developed this by asking them where they were going and what they would do when they got there. Children then had to use their imagination further to describe their adventure.
- Children master new skills quickly because adults support and coach them effectively. For example, a child on a bike wanted to learn how to pedal. The member of staff talked him through the process and stayed nearby to observe and intervene with further support. By the end of the session, the child was proficiently pedalling, developing his physical skills.
- Children's learning of early literacy and numeracy skills are woven skilfully into activities. A group of boys worked together with an adult on an extensive piece retelling the story of *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. Having previously acted this outdoors while being filmed, the boys recounted the tale, and remembered the sequence of the story. They recorded this as a map, which they then annotated, using the video of their outdoor play and the book as prompts.
- Language and literacy acquisition is seen as vital to the children's continuing success, as the vast majority of children are at an early stage of developing their understanding and use of the English language. A game of identifying items was extended so that children had to describe aspects more fully, identifying similarities and differences such as 'clean' and 'dirty' wellingtons, or 'smiling' and 'crying' babies. Staff were skilled at asking children to identify what was the same about these objects and what was different. Other children observed this and began playing their own game in the reading area using characters from their book bag.
- Children concentrate and listen well because of the excellent relationships and high expectations of adults. When being read a story, children sit attentively throughout, and join in when requested to repeat phrases and actions. They are able to sit for a long time absorbed by the retelling of a traditional tale, and at the end are eager to respond when asked questions to demonstrate how much they have learned. However, children are not always given the chance to respond and this limits the opportunities they have to develop their language skills.
- A wide variety of observations and photographs are used to record evidence of children's achievements. Staff use these well to assess children's learning and plan for their next stage of development.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the nursery at various stages of development. The majority of children have more limited knowledge and understanding and fewer skills than are typical for their age. They make good progress from their starting points. The vast majority of these children are at the earliest stages of learning English. School information shows that any gaps between groups of children have disappeared when they move on into Reception class. By the time they leave the nursery, the majority reach a good level of development across all areas of learning and are particularly well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Children make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and learn to become confident, independent learners.
- The most-able children make excellent progress and leave nursery exceeding age-related expectations.
- The excellent partnership between the nursery and the children's centre means that children who are disabled or who have special educational needs are identified very early. Any intervention or support is put in place before the child begins to attend the nursery. Children receive very effective support because, as

well as using their own expertise, adults are skilled at carrying out advice from other professionals. This means that these children make excellent progress from their starting points.

- Children have a keen interest in books and stories. Listening to stories is a daily part of their experience in nursery, and children frequently choose books to look at alone. They learn that print has meaning as they read books with adults, or write their own versions of stories with the support of adults. They learned the difference between fiction and non-fiction when talking about the story of *The Gingerbread Man*, and thinking about where you would go to learn how to make gingerbread.
- Children have plenty of opportunities for mark-making and writing, both indoors and outdoors. For example, they used paint brushes to draw through fine sand, as staff described the movements in the pattern and children began to repeat them.
- While children's progress is good and standards are higher than at the time of the previous inspection, not enough children leave the nursery at or above the level of development typical for their age.

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

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| Unique reference number | 103137 |
| Local authority | Birmingham |
| Inspection number | 448083 |

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

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| Type of school | Nursery |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 2–4 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 101 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | John Ritson |
| Headteacher | Mandy Cryan |
| Date of previous school inspection | 26 June 2012 |
| Telephone number | 0121 675 3421 |
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