

Shenley Fields Nursery School

Woodcock Lane, Birmingham, B31 1BU

Inspection dates 5–6 November 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The headteacher and the governors share a clear vision for making this an outstanding Nursery. They have improved the good teaching and standards of achievement seen in the previous inspection even further by setting high standards for all the early years practitioners in the school. In this way they have ensured that the Nursery offers an excellent education to all the children who attend it.
- All adults are leaders of learning and are eager to improve and learn from each other. They continuously share information about children's needs, interests and achievements, and use this in their planning. Their constant reflection about their own performance and the progress children make results in exceptional teaching and achievement.
- The highly effective relationships and continual dialogue adults have established with parents enable parents to make an important contribution to their children's learning.
- The support and guidance provided for disabled children and those who have special educational needs and their families is strong. Highly effective partnerships with other professionals and the local children's centre mean that children's needs are met well, even before they start the Nursery.
- Children respond enthusiastically and confidently to all they are asked to do, and are keen to learn. They feel safe and play and learn together harmoniously. Even minor disagreements are rare.
- The trusting relationships between adults and children result in excellent behaviour and attendance.
- Adults' organise activities very carefully and prompt the children to use the resources they are provided with creatively and imaginatively. This helps to extend children's learning and contributes strongly to their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Achievement is outstanding. Adults' expectations are high for all the children; consequently they make rapid progress. Children who are capable of achieving the higher levels of development invariably do so as a result of the constant challenge built into the activities they are given.
- The governing body is well informed about the work of the Nursery. Governors focus effectively on ensuring that children achieve well in a safe and stimulating environment and ensures the school gives them a strong foundation for their future learning. They recognise the importance of strengthening the school's early years practice even further by developing stronger partnerships with other schools.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed five sessions across the school, including one jointly with the deputy 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.
- The inspector took into consideration the 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and interviewed 20 parents.
- The inspector took into account the views expressed by the staff in the eight questionnaires they returned.

Inspection team

Geoffrey Dorrity, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Shenley Fields Nursery is an average-sized Nursery school. It offers 62 full time equivalent places. Currently 46 children attend full-time and 27 part-time.
- There is provision for 46 children, ranging from three months to children aged two years, which is registered separately and does not form part of this inspection.
- The majority of families are from a White British background. Of the children who are from other heritages there is no predominant group.
- A very small minority of children are learning English as an additional language.
- At 2%, the proportion of children supported through early years action is below average. The proportion of children supported at early years action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is 10%, which is average.
- No children are eligible for the pupil premium due to their age.
- The Nursery holds the Healthy Schools Award.
- The headteacher is the current Chairperson of the Birmingham Nursery School Headteachers' Consortium. He is also a member of the local consortium of school leaders and the steering group of the local children's centre.
- He supports partner schools within the City and is a key contributor to the Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP) School-to-School Support initiative.
- The Nursery is a member of the 'Early Excellence' network and regularly promotes and hosts training opportunities for staff development for maintained and private and voluntary sector providers.
- Since the previous inspection the Nursery has de-registered as a children's centre, although some family support is still delivered on site.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the partnerships with local schools and settings and those farther afield, to develop the high quality early years practice already evident in the school even further.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Pivotal to the school's successes and children's outstanding achievement is the inspirational leadership of the headteacher. He is exceptionally well-supported by other leaders, staff and governors. Their vision and ambition are shared by all members of staff. Within the school there is a relentless focus on improving the provision still further and building on already good levels of achievement; consequently, children make rapid gains in their reading, writing and numeracy skills as well as the other areas of learning.
- The school's own evaluation of its work and plans for further improvement demonstrate that leaders accurately assess the strengths of the Nursery. Despite the high standards achieved, there is no sense of complacency. Such determination has led to marked improvements in teaching since the last inspection, to such an extent that outstanding teaching and learning are now the norm.
- Working closely together, school leaders have established a positive climate of high expectations, which encourages children to attend regularly and ensures they learn and behave exceptionally well. Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated. This is demonstrated in the commitment of all adults to ensuring that every child can achieve well and the very positive impact they have on children's learning and progress. The whole team is determined to ensure that children develop the skills, curiosity and resilience that will give them a strong foundation beyond their nursery school experience.
- The way children's progress and achievement are checked has been improved and, as a result, leaders and staff have a detailed knowledge of the progress children are making. External reviews and meetings ensure adults' judgements of the progress children make are accurate.
- The strong staff team are very effective in leading in their areas of responsibility. They maintain an extremely close oversight of the quality of learning experiences offered to each child. During daily staff reflection time they systematically review the impact of what they are doing and consider how they might be even more effective. In this way, children's learning is constantly enriched and supplemented, and their rapid progress maintained. Any variances in the achievement of individual children are quickly identified and addressed.
- The quality of teaching is regularly checked, and staff benefit from a good opportunities to undertake training to enhance their teaching skills. The arrangements for managing the performance of staff and for setting them improvement targets are robust, and targets are linked closely to the school's priorities and shared with governors. This is one of the ways in which adults are helped to develop their teaching and leadership skills. As a result, teaching is ambitious and has a marked impact on children's achievement.
- Children are excited by, and thoroughly enjoy, their learning. The topics and areas taught are imaginative and wide-ranging and provide excellent opportunities for children to extend their learning and other aspects of their development. The exceptionally well thought-out learning environment, where children are encouraged to make creative and imaginative use of the resources made available to them, supports their development extremely well. This has a very positive impact on children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. 'It's fantastic', is how one parent described the curriculum.
- Children are regularly consulted about what they would like to learn and encouraged to plan their own learning. Children's physical, health and well-being are especially well-promoted through the very good use of the outdoors area. Children are helped to understand basic British values, such as fairness and respect for others. Children from all backgrounds are valued and included, and children quickly and naturally come to understand the different cultural festivals that they know are important to other groups whose beliefs may be different to their own.
- The well-established partnerships with the children's centre and other agencies contribute significantly to the success of the Nursery in ensuring disabled children and those who have special educational needs are given the support they need. This helps them make the same good and outstanding progress as their classmates.

- The school receives appropriate levels of support from the local authority. The local authority recognises the strength of the school's work and promotes it as an example of exemplary practice.
- Safeguarding practices are extremely secure. All relevant policies relating to keeping children safe and healthy are regularly reviewed. The Nursery holds a weekly safeguarding meeting between the designated safeguarding leaders and professionals from the children's centre. Any concerns are brought forward and fully discussed to ensure no child or family slips through the net. Appropriate support is swiftly organised to ensure children are kept safe from harm. All staff and governors have undertaken anti-radicalisation training and demonstrate a keen awareness of the importance of this issue.

The governance of the school:

- Governors bring a range of skills and experience that are relevant to the work of the school in the areas of education and finance. Minutes show that they closely check priorities in the school development plan, know how well the children are doing and ask important questions of school leaders. As a result, they are able to provide a good balance of support and challenge to the headteacher, and this has helped ensure that the quality of teaching and children's achievement have improved to the point where both are outstanding. Governors spend time in the school, getting to know the children, staff and families. They take learning walks to get a better understanding of the delivery of the curriculum and its impact on children's learning. They undertake training to ensure that they are up to date and have followed the guidance provided by an external adviser when setting targets for the headteacher. Governors fully understand the quality of teaching and the need for a clear link between pay and performance. They manage finances efficiently; making sure that money is spent wisely to support children's learning, for example in the purchase of a shed to enable children to record their work no matter the weather. Governors have undertaken relevant safeguarding training to ensure that safeguarding requirements are well met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Staff provide a warm, nurturing environment and have high expectations for good behaviour. Children quickly become familiar with the Nursery routines and settle in well. As a result there is a calm atmosphere throughout the Nursery and children listen and respond well to instructions.
- Children have excellent attitudes to their learning and are extremely well-motivated and engaged. Often they are absorbed for long periods of time in their chosen activity, whether they are by themselves, with other children or with adults.
- Staff themselves provide excellent models of the levels of courtesy, respect and kindness they expect from the children. As a result, the children quickly begin to display these qualities as they learn to take turns and to think about others. Children are encouraged to help one another by, for example, getting a resource for another child.
- Children with social, emotional, behavioural or special educational needs are expertly supported in taking a full part in all the Nursery has to offer. Space, resources and activities are designed to ensure that the needs of all children are being met.
- Children really enjoy coming to school. The school makes considerable efforts to ensure that families understand the importance of regular attendance and getting to school on time. As a result, attendance is very good.
- Parents say that children behave well and the nursery reports that there are no bullying or racist incidents.

Safety

- The Nursery's work to keep children safe and secure is outstanding. There is a great emphasis on settling children and helping them to play together and share. Adults quickly and gently talk to children, showing

and explaining safe behaviours such as turn-taking. This results in safe and trusting relationships between children and between children and adults.

- Children feel safe and secure and their parents agree. Many parents were very keen to give their views about the school during the inspection. They were overwhelmingly positive, with many saying the school was like a 'big family', and 'they look out for you as well as your child'.
- Children very successfully learn to play and work safely in a range of contexts. For example, in cooking and baking activities, preparing snacks and many cutting and sticking activities, they learn to handle sharp tools.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching over time has been outstanding because staff have a strong understanding of how children learn. This is reflected in the proportion of children leaving the nursery at or above the levels of development typically seen at their age. The school's own checks and all inspection evidence confirm that teaching is excellent across all the areas of the curriculum. This is having a positive impact on children's learning.
- All adults working with children have high expectations of what they can achieve. Consequently, all children, and particularly those identified as the most able, make rapid progress in their learning. Adults spend a great deal of time with individual and small groups of children in developing key skills, both indoors and out. At a very early stage, children are successfully taught to take responsibility for organising their own learning. In one good example, children were asked to design and build a shelter for 'Beat Baby', having first identified what makes a good house and the resources needed to complete the task.
- Staff routinely encourage children to persevere when in difficulty, work things out for themselves and experiment with different ways of doing things, and this aids their development. For instance, in the mud kitchen, children were challenged to identify the fruits in different teabags through using their sense of smell. They experimented and predicted what colour each bag would go as it got wet. They were then asked to plan for the next day to develop the experiment using real fruit.
- Children are taught how to use information and communication technology confidently to practise their skills and to take photographs of each other and their work. These records of their experiences are recorded in big books with a commentary written by the children themselves, so that they learn how to revisit and improve their learning and experiences.
- Teachers use every opportunity to develop children's understanding and use of numbers, space and measures. When exploring how gel felt, for example, children were encouraged to find different items related to Halloween and count the number of bats, and were then challenged to compare this to the number of pumpkins found. Similarly, in the construction area, children were challenged to create an aerial runway for toy cars, and then test how successful this had been. The teacher made excellent use of discussion to help the children explore how the design could have been made even better, using appropriate mathematical language.
- Daily small-group sessions are used well to help children to develop their literacy skills through songs, rhymes, stories and games. Here they begin to develop their early reading skills, gaining knowledge of the sounds letters make by identifying words that sound the same, such as 'bat' and 'hat'. These sessions also help children build confidence in their ability to communicate and develop their social skills.
- Early identification of needs and accurately targeted high-quality support ensures disabled children and those who have special educational needs to make progress which is at least as rapid as that of their classmates.
- At the end of each day, adults meet and plan the next steps of learning. This makes sure children's rapid progress is maintained and helps ensure the teachers' overall checks of children's learning needs are appropriately detailed. These assessments are used effectively to plan work which is suitably challenging

for all ability groups.

- Staff make home visits before children start at Nursery, so that they can meet parents and families and gather information about the children's needs and interests. This information is used particularly effectively to ensure that the environment is appropriate for children to make an exceptionally strong start to their education. Some of this information is recorded in children's learning stories. These, along with the school's other checks on children's progress, help the children make rapid gains in their learning.
- Families are successfully encouraged to support their children's learning at home, and through the school's well-organised workshops, gain a good understanding about child development and how children learn.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Most children start school with skills that are broadly in line with those typically seen at their age, although their levels of communication and social skill often vary considerably. Since the last inspection, achievement has improved so that all children make rapid and sustained progress in all areas of their learning and development. Most children leave the Nursery with levels that are better than those typically found for their age in individual aspects of their learning. Increasing proportions of children exceed these expectations in all the areas of development.
- The needs of more able children are carefully planned for and met so that they also make good progress in their reading, writing and numeracy. In the gel activity, for example, children were successfully practising letter sounds and blends, and linking them to words they knew which rhymed.
- Any gaps in progress and achievement between different groups of children are closed by the time children leave because the school makes excellent use of data about individual children and different groups to check on the impact of teaching. Staff then make the necessary changes to planned activities to ensure that no individuals or groups fall behind.
- All children develop their social and communication skills extremely well. The high priority given to improving children's speaking and listening helps to ensure that rapid progress is made in these areas. Children want to talk because adults are interested in what they have to say, have time to listen and skilfully guide and prompt them.
- Achievement in reading and writing is excellent. Mark making and drawing feature highly in the activities offered to children, both indoors and outdoors. Children listen attentively at story time. The Nursery is full of attractive books, written displays and signs. These help children begin to make sense of letters and the sounds they make and to practise reading words.
- Children make rapid progress in developing mathematical skills. Consequently, children are confident in using and applying their knowledge of number and shape in other areas of learning. This was illustrated by children counting out the correct number of plates that were needed at lunch time compared to the number of children being served.
- The indoor and outdoor areas, such as the mud kitchen, and construction areas, provide excellent opportunities for all children to demonstrate their creative, imaginative and physical skills.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs are extremely well-supported by staff and specialists so that they also make rapid and sustained progress.
- Children from minority ethnic groups and those who are new to learning English make excellent progress during their time at nursery school. This is because the school values the heritage and language of every family, and staff ensure that children are given individual support when they need it to help them learn rapidly.

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 | 103142 |
| Local authority | Birmingham |
| Inspection number | 447916 |

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 | 3-4 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 71 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Brian Chatham |
| Headteacher | David Aldworth |
| Date of previous school inspection | 03/10/2011 |
| Telephone number | 0121 6753065 |
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