

Sand Dunes Nursery School

Caradoc Road, Seaforth, Liverpool, Merseyside, L21 1HP

Inspection dates 18–19 November 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The acting headteacher communicates high expectations for children’s learning. She is well supported by an enthusiastic staff team who are committed to providing the best possible start for children.
- Despite changes to leadership and governance since the last inspection, the school has continued to make improvements. The outdoor learning environment and systems to track children’s learning have been developed well.
- Staff establish warm, positive relationships with children and skilfully promote children’s confidence and self-esteem. As a result children are happy and secure in nursery.
- Children achieve well. They make rapid progress in personal, social, emotional and physical development and good progress in other areas of learning.
- Children enjoy their time at nursery and are actively engaged in the activities and resources provided. They behave well and show a good awareness of how to keep safe.
- Teaching is consistently good. Staff know the children’s skills and abilities well and use this knowledge to provide a broad range of interesting activities to develop learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The governing body’s skills and knowledge currently do not ensure that governors can provide the best possible level of challenge and support for the school.
- Staff do not always make the most of chances to extend children’s learning and encourage children to take the initiative.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed a range of sessions or part-sessions, two of which were joint observations with the acting headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, Chair of the Governing Body, three other governors, other staff and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the nursery'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.
- There were insufficient responses to the online Parent View survey for them to be taken into account. However, the inspector spoke to several parents when they brought their children to nursery and took account of both the school's most recent questionnaire to parents and the responses to staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Elaine White, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is smaller than most nursery schools. Children attend part time, for morning, afternoon or full day sessions. Most children attending are of White British heritage.
- The school is situated in a building shared with Sand Dunes Nursery Childcare Service. Seaforth Children's Centre is on the same site, in a neighbouring building. The acting headteacher of the nursery is also head of the day nursery and children's centre. The day nursery and children's centre are subject to separate inspection and reports of their quality can be found on the website www.ofsted.gov.uk.
- The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs is average. There are no children on roll with a statement of educational needs.
- From September 2011 until November 2014 the school was part of a formal collaboration with Greenacres Community Nursery School. The schools had separate governing bodies, but had the same headteacher and deputy. On 1 November 2014 this collaboration ceased and an acting headteacher was appointed for Sand Dunes Nursery School.
- Since the last inspection there have been a number of changes to the membership of the governing body. The position of Chair of Governors has changed twice. The current chair was appointed in October 2014.
- The nursery retains its close links with Greenacres Community Nursery School and works closely with other nursery schools to share good practice.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the governors continue to develop their knowledge and skills to make sure they can provide the best possible support and challenge to the school.
- Ensure that staff more consistently make the most of chances to extend children's learning and encourage children to take the initiative.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Despite the changes to leadership and governance, leaders have ensured that children are provided with an environment where they are nurtured and taught well. As a result, children achieve well and the school continues to do well.
- The acting headteacher provides strong leadership. She has high expectations and ambitions for continuous improvement and children's achievement. Her strong commitment is shared by staff who work well together to promote children's learning.
- The acting headteacher has an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Action plans are based on key priorities for development and precise targets are identified for improving children's achievement.
- Children's learning is monitored closely and this system has been developed since the last inspection. This means that leaders and staff have a very accurate view of the progress that individual children and groups of children make. Any gaps are swiftly identified and action taken to make sure this is remedied. For example, it was identified that boys were making less progress than girls in managing feelings and behaviour. Staff provided support for boys in this area, and the gap was closed.
- Effective systems to check on the quality of teaching ensure that teaching over time is consistently good. Staff performance is reviewed regularly, targets are set and training undertaken to develop staff skills further.
- Leaders provide children with a broad and interesting curriculum which is related to their needs and interests. Children's interests in books, stories, or other topics such as trains are used to plan interesting activities, which develop learning well.
- All children are positively included and welcomed in the nursery. Children are taught in a harmonious environment where everyone is valued and all have equal opportunity to learn. Leaders and staff promote an ethos of positive relationships and respect for one another. This helps to prepare children for life in modern Britain.
- The school establishes positive relationships with parents. It has further developed the methods of communication with parents, for example through text messages as well as newsletters and conversations. Parents say they have good communication with the nursery and that their children make good progress in learning.
- The school takes effective steps to safeguard children. Its safeguarding and child protection procedures are implemented consistently well.
- The local authority has supported school leaders well in managing the changes to leadership and governance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is supportive and has a good knowledge of the school, including the quality of teaching. Governors are well informed about children's progress through school data and understand how good teaching is rewarded. Although there have been changes to the membership, including the role of chair, the governing body has provided both challenge and support in the transition from the collaboration with Greenacres Nursery School and the resulting appointment of an acting headteacher. Since the last inspection the headteacher's appraisal and the school budget have been managed well. The governing body ensures that safeguarding requirements are met. The school now has a number of recently appointed governors and is seeking to appoint a further two members in the near future. All new members are undertaking training and are committed and enthusiastic about their new roles. However, at present the governors' skills and knowledge do not ensure that they can provide the best possible level of challenge and support for the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of children is good. Children are interested and engaged in their learning. They listen attentively to stories and show good concentration and involvement as, for example, they hunt for missing numbers in the outdoor area.
- Children have positive relationships with staff and one another. During imaginative play in the home corner area, children happily co-operated while one child made 'soup' for the others.
- Staff have high expectations for children's good behaviour. Children learn to be polite and are familiar with

the routines of nursery. This helps them to feel confident and secure.

- Staff manage children's behaviour well, acting as good role models and dealing skilfully with times when children find it difficult to manage their feelings and behaviour. As a result, children show very good progress in this aspect of learning.
- Children enjoy coming to nursery and this is reflected in their good levels of attendance. The school reports that there are no bullying or racist incidents.

Safety

- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is good. Children show that they feel safe in nursery by the ease with which they settle in and move around the different areas.
- Children develop a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe as staff remind them about using scissors safely. They move safely around the outdoor area on wheeled toys and confidently and safely use climbing equipment.
- Parents report that the school keeps their children safe and cares for them well.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching over time is consistently good. Staff make good use of space to provide an interesting and stimulating environment in which learning can be developed. Children have access to interesting resources at their height so that they can explore and use them. They make enthusiastic use of the broad range of resources for them to write or make marks, for example using chalks in the outdoor area and shopping lists indoors.
- Staff know the children's skills and abilities well and use this information effectively to plan activities which will interest children. Children were very involved in making model robots from boxes and other materials, following a story they had enjoyed about a robot.
- Staff are skilled at developing children's speaking skills. They model language well and encourage children to express their ideas fully. Children at an earlier stage of developing speaking skills are supported very well by staff. As a result children make good progress in this area, and those children who begin nursery with weaker language skills catch up quickly.
- Stories are used well by staff as a starting point to develop children's learning effectively. Children learn to listen well to stories, show a keen interest in the story and can confidently say who their favourite person was. They are challenged to think whether stories have a sad or happy ending.
- Children's mathematical skills are taught well. Children learn to count to 10 and beyond, and staff present activities in an interesting way to develop their learning. Children happily identify two-dimensional shapes in the sand tray and learn to recognise how many sides and corners shapes have. Outdoors, children excitedly look for numbers that have been hidden and correctly identify which number is still missing when they are put in order.
- Staff ensure that children's physical skills are promoted very well. Children are keen to use the climbing equipment and wheeled toys in the outdoor area. Staff ensure that children are supported well to develop skills riding scooters and using balls to throw and catch. Children learn to develop skills using their hands and fingers as they thread ribbons through wicker numbers and manipulate play dough with different tools and cutters.
- Staff generally question children well to develop and extend their understanding. At times, they do not take chances to promote learning further by asking more challenging questions or allowing children to take the initiative. For example, at times staff count objects for children or give an answer before children have chance to think.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Many children join nursery with weaker skills in personal, social and emotional development than other areas. Children make good progress from their individual starting points and achieve well. They are well prepared to start Reception class in their next school.
- Children make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. This is because staff are skilled in building relationships and developing children's self-esteem, confidence and their ability to manage their own feelings and behaviour.
- Children also make rapid progress in their physical development thanks to the broad range of opportunities provided for them to develop skills and staff's expert support and intervention to develop

learning to the full. Children show confidence in running, climbing and negotiating a path on wheeled toys. They show growing proficiency in using different materials to write with, such as chalks, pens and pencils.

- Children who join nursery with weaker language skills achieve very well as they are supported effectively to ensure that they make enough progress for them to catch up with their peers. Children learn to talk in complete sentences and are often keen to share their ideas.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress in line with that of their peers. They are helped very well and staff have close links with other professionals to ensure that children's needs are met well. As a result, children make good progress and some children make rapid progress in some areas.
- The most-able children make good progress and achieve well. They are in the main supported well through effective questioning by staff, although at times staff miss opportunities to extend learning to the full.
- Children achieve well in their early reading and writing skills. They show a keen interest in books and stories and frequently choose books to look at by themselves. They learn initial letter sounds and enthusiastically make marks and write shopping lists.
- Children show a natural interest in numbers and counting. They make good progress in recognising and ordering numbers to 10 and learn to count the correct number of objects to match a number.

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	104846
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	448087

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	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	45
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bev Harrison
Acting Headteacher	Hayley Stoba
Date of previous school inspection	9 November 2011
Telephone number	0151 928 3010
Fax number	0151 928 3010
Email address	head.sanddunesnursery@schools.sefton.gov.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

