

Earlham Nursery School

Cadge Road, Norwich, NR5 8DB

Inspection dates 26–27 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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 school is very well managed and the leadership of teaching is exceptionally strong. The headteacher leads by example, teaching every day and setting very high standards.
- Governors have the expertise and the experience to provide support and challenge so that the school is the very best it can be.
- The staff work outstandingly well as a team. They clearly enjoy working with the children.
- Teachers observe children closely so that they can provide them with exactly what they need to make rapid progress.
- Teachers are always seeking to improve, as shown by recent changes in the way mathematics is taught.
- Children's behaviour is outstanding. They show curiosity, resilience and persistence in their learning. They are very active, interested and engaged learners.
- The outside area provides an exceptionally rich and stimulating learning environment for the children.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs make exceptional progress because the school quickly identifies what they need to become good learners and puts help quickly in place.
- Parents value the school. They say they have regular information so that they know how well their children are doing.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector made five observations in the Nursery, one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior staff, the school's data manager, and the Chair of the Governing Body. A telephone meeting was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at documentation including children's 'learning journeys' and displays around the school. The school's own records of children's achievements were scrutinised.
- The inspector also looked at a wide range of management documentation including the school's own analysis of its performance, its plans to further improve the school, the record of the school's observations of teaching, and governance and safeguarding documentation.
- The inspector spoke with a number of parents during the inspection and took into account the school's most recent surveys completed by parents. Although some parents contributed to the online Parent View survey, there were not enough responses to show these results.
- The inspector spoke informally with children during observations.
- The inspector analysed 18 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Teresa Kiely, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Earlham Nursery School is an average sized nursery school. Children attend part-time, either during morning or afternoon sessions.
- The proportion of disabled children and those with special educational needs is above average.
- Most children are from a White British background; a very small number of children are from minority ethnic groups. A few children speak English as an additional language.
- The school is part of Earlham Early Years Centre and shares the same governing body. Earlham Early Years Centre also includes day care and a children's centre. These are inspected separately.
- Other schools regularly visit the school to look at its outside provision.
- Since the last inspection there has been a change of headship.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide children with more resources and activities that help them to use a wide range of technology to develop their understanding of the world they live in.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- There is exceptionally strong leadership of teaching. The headteacher has high expectations. She knows the excellent quality of the school's teaching. She successfully shares her vision for teaching with all those who are responsible for children's learning. She leads by example.
- Everyone involved with the school strives to make it the best it can be. School leaders know its strengths and have identified what they want to do next. They are not complacent. Each teacher has additional school responsibilities to help groups of children and subject areas to continue to improve. The appointment of a data manager has increased the school's capacity to evaluate its performance and make learning even better for children.
- The school works extremely hard to ensure that it continues to improve teachers' skills. For example, the school identified that children's mathematical learning was not as strong as other areas of learning. An action plan to address this included additional training and demonstrations of effective teaching; these improved the overall quality of teaching and resulted in better achievement in children's mathematical learning.
- School leaders know how to help children so that they can successfully develop their early reading, writing and mathematics. They are uncompromising in their insistence that this is part of everyday practice in the school.
- The curriculum is outstanding. It encourages children both through inside and outdoor learning. While the development of children's speaking and listening skills is given priority, the curriculum helps children to develop the skills they will need to be ready for the next stage in their education.
- Provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally strong because it is rooted in everything that happens during the school day. Children learn to respect one another. They enthusiastically join in with celebrations of diversity. They also learn about their own traditions through events such as annual maypole dancing.
- There are excellent relationships within each aspect of the integrated provision offered by Earlham Early Years Centre. Parents are able to get support from the on-site children's centre. The school regularly opens its doors to other schools and settings, with frequent visits to see the outside garden area.
- The local authority has high confidence in the school's leadership. It provides 'light touch' support to the school.
- The school has excellent relationships with parents. All the parents spoken to during the inspection valued highly the support their children receive from the school. They say staff are very welcoming. One parent spoke for many when she said, 'All my children came here. The teachers listen to me and tell me how well my son is doing'. An older sister who was listening to her mother speak then said, 'I loved Nursery!'
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very proud of the school. They have the expertise and experience to provide the school with support and challenge. Although the governors are responsible for the governance of the whole of the Earlham Early Years Centre, they have a separate plan for Earlham Nursery. This enables them to do the best job possible.
 - Governors regularly visit the school and have a very clear understanding of how well the school is doing. They support the headteacher in making decisions about the performance management of staff. Governors ensure that the safeguarding requirements are met, and that children are kept safe.

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

- The behaviour of children is outstanding because the school knows how to encourage the best behaviour from children. Adults work very hard to help children to feel at home in the school. They praise children when they are doing well. The school is very quick to help children who need more help from an adult to behave well.
- The school is very good at managing the way in which newly arrived children learn the day-to-day routines. As a result, children settle happily and quickly into the school.
- Children show by everything they do that they want to learn. This is because everyone who works with the children knows how to help them to become excellent learners. Adults help children to work together and to cooperate with one another. They foster children's persistence and resilience, helping them to continue with activities even when they find them difficult. As a result children are very active and engaged learners.
- The school works hard to encourage parents to send their children to school. Even though it is not statutory for this age group, the school monitors attendance and reminds parents of the benefits of children coming to school regularly.

Safety

- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is outstanding. Relationships between adults and children are exceptional and this contributes to children's safety and well-being. Adults know when to intervene to keep children safe and healthy. Children and their parents say that they are safe in the school.
- The school ensures the safe management of staff and buildings. For example, in the outside area, children have an opportunity to learn by playing with running water, but the pond is securely covered.
- Regular risk assessments ensure that children are safe at all times. The school encourages children to think about the risks they take so that they can learn how to behave safely when they are not in the school. The outside area particularly offers children challenge, such as climbing trees, in a safe environment.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding because all the adults who work with the children know exactly what to do to make learning the best it can be. There is a very strong sense of team work and enjoyment in the school. Staff enthusiastically join the children in play, for example by encouraging them to count the number of times they pour water from the outside stream into a large container. There is an air of fun in the Nursery. Children want to learn.
- The organisation of the day encourages children to be active, independent learners. Children learn just as well when they are engaged in independent activities, when they are playing with support from an adult, or when they are working with an adult in a small group. They learn socially by painting together, by building models with friends, or when they are engaged in imaginative play such as 'going on a train journey'. Reading, writing and mathematics are taught across all the areas of learning.
- Frequent and accurate assessments contribute to the excellent progress of children of all abilities. The assessments help adults to know exactly what challenges they need to provide next for children. Adults regularly reflect together on what children have learned to make their next steps in learning even better. They also help parents to know how well their children are doing and regularly share their 'learning journeys' with them.
- Teachers teach early reading skills exceptionally well. For example, day-to-day routines, such as snack and self-registration, are used to encourage children to read their names. Teachers enthusiastically read

stories so that children begin to learn that print carries meaning. They develop vocabulary linked to the story by introducing interesting games that catch children's imagination. They support children's early phonic work by helping them to identify the initial sounds they can hear in words. This type of support also helps children who speak English as an additional language. Children also benefit from interactions with adults that help them to talk about what they are learning through their play.

- Children who find learning more difficult have carefully prepared play plans that enable them to succeed. Everyone knows what they need to do to help the children. Sometimes they are encouraged to work in very small groups so that they can develop their language skills.
- The outside area provides a learning environment that offers exceptional challenge for all the children. For example, they learn about mathematics by using the mud kitchen. They cook food that they have grown. They know where the interesting mini-beasts hide, and regularly check these areas; they talk about what they have seen and adults share reference books with them so that they can find out more about the insects. Adults know how to ask challenging questions that make children think about their learning.
- The school uses equipment such as programmable toys and cameras to teach children about technology. However, children do not yet have access to a wide enough range of technological equipment so that they can choose technology for particular purposes.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children start school with a range of skills, knowledge and experiences. While their physical skills are typical for their age, their communication, language, personal, social and emotional skills are far weaker. From these limited starting points, their achievements develop very quickly as they learn a wide range of skills. They make very rapid progress so that they are well prepared for entry to Reception class when they leave the school.
- Children's progress in the prime areas of learning (communication and language, physical, personal, social and emotional development) is particularly noticeable because teachers know exceptionally well how to talk with children to encourage them to communicate. They also know how to help children to become curious and independent learners and to develop a love of learning. Children's physical skills are developed through carefully planned and independent activities inside and outside. As a result, children's progress in the prime areas is outstanding.
- Children make rapid progress in all the specific areas of learning and development. Children's progress in reading and writing is outstanding because they receive the necessary help and support to develop these skills. For example they are encouraged to write their names, and these are displayed proudly in the class; they are then encouraged to hear and say the first sound in their names and to read their names independently.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs make exceptional progress because their needs are identified quickly and appropriate support is put in place. When children need help from other agencies, they are referred quickly so that they can get expert help.
- The most able children make excellent progress during their time in the school. They are encouraged to learn at their own level, and their progress is carefully tracked to make sure that they continue to learn at a fast pace. When they need it, they receive adult support that builds effectively on what they already know.
- Children who speak English as an additional language receive the help and support they need. They are encouraged to develop their language skills through their play with others, and by carefully planned activities that help them to develop their language skills.
- A recent dip in children's early mathematical skills has been corrected quickly by improving the quality of teaching. Children are encouraged to count whenever the opportunity arises. For example, children counted together in the outside area as they splashed through water; and inside as they enthusiastically

poured water into containers and learned about capacity. They guess numbers and are encouraged to have favourite numbers and explain why they like them.

The early years provision is outstanding

- All children in this school are in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The report sections above evaluate the school's quality.

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	120767
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	448111

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	85
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Verney
Headteacher	Stephanie Harding
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2012
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