

Greenacre Community Nursery School

Province Place, Bootle, Merseyside, L20 6PJ

Inspection dates 10–11 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Leaders and governors succeed in their aim of making a difference to children's future education. Children's achievement is good. They make good progress and are well looked after in this caring school.
- The achievement of children who are disabled or who have special educational needs is good.
- Children with complex physical and learning needs make good progress and they are cared for exceptionally well.
- Good quality teaching encourages children to want to learn.
- Parents are positive about the nursery and many say they do not want their child to leave. They help to improve their child's attendance.
- Children's curiosity for learning is stimulated by a wide range of opportunities such as baking, dancing, art and early number activities, both indoors and outside.
- Children are bubbly, bright and keen to get on with learning. Staff value them as the unique individuals they are.
- The good behaviour of children is a sign of how safe and secure they feel. They become more confident and self-assured because of the value that is placed on them by staff.
- Leaders and governors are ambitious for children and improving children's outcomes is at the heart of improvement planning. They have maintained the positive outcomes from the previous inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching and children's achievement are not yet outstanding. Some of the most-able children do not make better than typical progress because their skills are not routinely extended.
- The staff's teaching of phonics (how to link letters and sounds) does not encourage children's whole-hearted participation.
- Plans for the outdoor area do not make the most of the space to ensure that children are encouraged to practise their early reading and writing skills.
- Children's targets are challenging, but are not set to target outstanding achievement.

Information about this inspection

- A wide range of sessions was observed by inspectors and the headteacher. Children’s learning was reviewed, including their ‘floor books’ and ‘observation diaries’.
- Discussions were held with governors, a representative from the local authority, members of staff, parents and children.
- Inspectors reviewed parents’ responses to school questionnaires and took into account their views in conversations with parents. There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, to take into account.
- The inspectors looked at school documents, including records of governing body meetings, the school’s view of its effectiveness, records of children’s progress, children’s work, procedures to keep children safe and plans to improve the school further.

Inspection team

Marie Cordey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Barbara Harrold

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Greenacre is smaller than the average-sized nursery school. Children attend part time in the main, either at a morning or an afternoon session and some children attend for 15 hours over two and a half days at the beginning or end of the week.
- The school provides 'wrap-around' care for children to attend all day instead of just the morning or afternoon sessions, if parents choose this.
- The vast majority of children are from white British backgrounds.
- The proportion of children who are disabled or have special educational needs is above average. The school offers specially resourced provision for nine children with complex physical and learning needs.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure outstanding achievement for children and even more rapid progress by:
 - improving the quality of teaching so that all children, and particularly the most able, are stimulated to engage and extend their learning
 - developing more imaginative and creative ways of teaching phonics (linking letters and the sounds they make) to develop children's early reading and writing further
 - providing more learning activities outdoors to develop children's reading and writing skills.
- Further improve leadership and management by:
 - setting even more challenging targets based on children developing their skills and understanding exceptionally well.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The very clear ambitions of the headteacher are supported well by the assistant headteacher and all staff in improving children's outcomes. The culture of the school is one where good teaching and achievement, as well as good personal development, can flourish. Taking effective action on areas for improvement from the previous inspection has been an important part of school improvement.
- The quality of teaching is checked on regularly and robustly by the headteacher. She makes no excuses for challenging teachers, key carers and teaching assistants to accelerate children's progress. Clear actions for improvement are both challenging and supportive. Teachers want the best for the children and they respond positively to targets to improve their performance and tailored professional training to improve the quality of their teaching.
- Leaders have worked well to produce clear records of children's progress. Targets for children's achievement are challenging, but are not based on children making exceptional progress in their learning and therefore improving their skills and increasing their knowledge still further.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted well through a broad and interesting curriculum and good teaching. Children achieve well, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs. Effective support for children with very complex physical and learning needs and exceptional care contribute to their good achievement. However, the most-able children do not make progress quite as quickly as others.
- Children know the difference between right and wrong and are taught to think of others as well as themselves. They are well-mannered, polite and are very proud of their green school jumpers. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Children are very sociable and keen to converse with each other and adults. They are made aware of the different groups of people in Britain and how important it is to be tolerant and to be 'kind' to people, no matter what their background.
- Partnerships with a 'hub' of local schools and with the local authority are effective in sharing good practice and providing mutual challenge and support.
- The local authority has provided regular and thorough support to help improve the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Good governance is based on continual school improvement. Governors carefully question and challenge the school's effectiveness. They take part in regular governor training on school improvement and safeguarding children. Safety arrangements and safeguarding meet requirements. Finances are managed carefully and effectively. Specialist resourced provision is managed well by the governing body. Governors review the achievement of all children closely and use this information when they examine the performance of staff and consider pay progression.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of children is good. Their imagination is captured by interesting activities. Children thrive because their self-esteem is bolstered and they are encouraged to 'have a go' because staff believe in their capabilities.
- Children are courteous and are often the first to open conversations with adults and visitors. They are eager to know exactly what adults are doing and are confident enough to ask searching questions. Children politely and charmingly asked an inspector what was being written about them.
- Clear expectations of behaviour are shared with children who know what is expected from them. Staff respond quickly when, occasionally, children are unwilling to share or 'take turns'.
- Children are eager to learn and explore their surroundings. Their enthusiasm is infectious and spreads to staff and visitors. Occasionally, some children are not as involved in activities when these are not precisely matched to their interests and level of understanding.
- Children know who to turn to if they have any worries and they have strong relationships with their key carers. Partnerships with a variety of external agencies, such as speech and language support and the National Health Service, make a positive contribution to children's well-being.
- Children's attendance is not compulsory for this age, but good partnerships with parents and a competitive rewards system have contributed to attendance improving year on year. It is not where leaders want it to be yet and therefore it remains a school priority.

Safety

- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is good. Governors and leaders check on the safety of the building regularly. Governors ensure that their safety training is regular as well as ensuring that staff training is up to date and meets requirements.
- Safeguarding arrangements do not limit children's sense of adventure or them taking acceptable risks. For example, a row of plastic bubbles is used by children to learn to balance and improve their physical development. When on occasions, children overbalance, they pick themselves up and try again. Staff have ensured that they land on soft earth and those that fall are determined to 'have another go' until they succeed.
- Children feel safe and their parents agree. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of children who know who to go to if they are concerned or if they need any help or reassurance.
- Facilities and resources for disabled children, those with special educational needs and for children with complex physical and learning needs enable those children to play and learn safely and securely.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching is based on the determination of staff to raise children's achievement. Activities are therefore carefully planned to match the different needs and interests of children. This includes children who are disabled or those with special educational needs and children with complex physical and learning needs. The staff's good knowledge of early years learning and effective use of key carers and teaching assistants contributes well to the good progress the children make.
- Staff are skilful in encouraging children's curiosity for learning and their perseverance. Learning about the Chinese New Year was extended because children were so engrossed in what they were learning. Boys and girls took part in a Chinese banquet, many of whom used chopsticks dextrously and better than many adults, as a teacher commented. They were excited to dress up as emperors and empresses and to study examples of Chinese writing.
- Children enjoy music. They tidy up to the accompaniment of classical music; a child said to the teacher that 'This music is beautiful'. They enjoyed demonstrating their dance moves on the stage outdoors and listen attentively to rhythmic story-telling. This enthusiasm and appreciation is not built on consistently in the teaching of phonics. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to create the energy and zest for learning seen across the school to practise children's early reading and writing in a wide range of activities.
- The most-able children are identified and activities are planned to 'stretch' their capabilities. However, these are not always sufficiently challenging to extend their learning and knowledge so that they can make more rapid progress.
- Parents know how well their children are progressing through regular progress meetings and in more frequent conversations with teachers and key carers. A small number of parents would like to be more informed about their child's progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the setting with a wide variety of skills and understanding that are typically below those for their age. By the time they are ready to leave the nursery, their skills and understanding are in line with those typical for their age. Their personal and physical development is above that typical for their age. Children are well prepared for primary school, not just in terms of their skills and understanding, but also in their good personal development.
- Children who are disabled, those with special educational needs and children with complex physical and learning needs make good progress from their different starting points. This is because every child's particular need is identified quickly and followed by tailored activities to help them develop personally and in their learning. A mixture of small-group work and one-to-one teaching is effective in supporting children to move forward quickly in their learning.
- Children's early reading and writing skills have improved since the previous inspection. They are proud of their mark-making and many children are able to write their names. This is limited at times, because some opportunities are missed to transmit the joy of learning children experience in most areas of the curriculum to linking sounds and letters. In contrast, children enjoy learning about numbers, whether in counting out objects to match a number or thinking about what to spend money on, for instance.
- The most-able children make at least typical progress in their learning, although it is comparatively slower than that of others.

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	104848
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	447920

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	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Barrington
Headteacher	Cathy Earley
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2012
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