

Plym Bridge Nursery School and Day Care

Miller Way, Estover, Plymouth, PL6 8UN

Inspection dates 24–25 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, ably supported by staff and governors, provides determined and effective leadership. This has led to significant improvement since the last inspection, particularly in teaching and children's achievement.
- Children make good progress from their starting points and achieve well. They leave the school ready for the Reception Year.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs achieve as well as other children because their support is good.
- The teaching of early reading, writing and mathematics is effective, with children learning through play. Children benefit from the adults' improved knowledge of how to teach these important areas of learning.
- Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school. They are very appreciative of the care and help given to their children.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. They play and work extremely well together. They thoroughly enjoy exciting activities which help them to explore and develop their own interests.
- Very effective systems are in place to keep children safe and secure.
- Children show an excellent understanding of the routines of the nursery. Adults establish warm and friendly relationships that help to build children's confidence and independence very effectively.
- Leaders promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Children have a wealth of opportunities to develop their imagination and to experience wonder at the world around them.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Children's thinking is not always fully extended.
- Staff with specific responsibilities do not always check on the provision and the outcomes for children in their area of learning.
- Governors do not always use information from their visits to challenge leaders even more effectively about the quality of teaching and learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed children playing and learning in a range of activities, including those where children were free to choose for themselves and those led by an adult. Most observations were undertaken in conjunction with the headteacher.
- The inspector spoke to children about their learning, looked at displays and samples of records of their learning and their work.
- A range of documents were examined, including systems for checking children’s progress, records of their behaviour and attendance, records of checks made on the quality of teaching and the minutes of governing body meetings.
- The inspector checked the school’s work to keep children safe.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body and school staff. A meeting also took place with a representative from the local authority.
- Parents and carers talked to the inspector either at the beginning or the end of the school day. In addition, she took account of the 14 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Questionnaires completed by 10 staff were also examined.

Inspection team

Sandra Woodman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The maintained nursery school is an average size for schools of its type.
- The school federated with Ham Drive Nursery School and Day Care in January 2014. The schools share the same headteacher and have one governing body.
- All children attend part time. They stay at the nursery until they transfer to the Reception class in their chosen primary school.
- The very large majority of children are from a White British background.
- Because of their age, no children are eligible for the pupil premium, which is extra funding from the government for those children who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled children and those with special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school provides extra care for children through breakfast, lunch and after-school clubs.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the school's overall effectiveness to outstanding by:
 - developing the ability of all adults to challenge children in their learning activities so that they think harder
 - making sure that all leaders check the provision in their areas of responsibility so that the learning is the best it can be
 - ensuring that governors always use information from their visits to challenge leaders even more effectively about the quality of teaching and learning.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has instilled a strong sense of ambition for all children and established effective teamwork across the school. Since the previous inspection, changes to the leadership and the staffing have led to an increase in the rate of improvement in all aspects of the school's work. As a result, teaching is consistently good and children's achievement is rising.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and the school's improvement plans identify the right priorities for the school in order to continue developing.
- Senior leaders check teaching more frequently and rigorously than previously. They follow up these checks with good support and training which help staff to improve their practice effectively. The focus on developing adults' interactions with children has led to faster progress in children's speaking and listening skills.
- The headteacher, governors and senior staff make sure that there is no discrimination and that children have equal opportunities to succeed. Thorough and regular checks on children's progress have ensured that appropriate help and support are given to disabled children, those disadvantaged and those with special educational needs. This enables them to make equally good progress as their classmates.
- The performance of staff is managed rigorously and staff have challenging targets for improving their work. Teachers know that any salary increase is linked to the good progress their children make.
- Staff with specific responsibilities do not always check the quality of provision and outcomes in their area. Consequently, the extent of the impact of their work to improve teaching is limited.
- The curriculum is rich and exciting and provides excellent opportunities for children to explore their own ideas and interests. Considerable thought goes into ensuring that activities will enthuse the children and capture their imagination. For example, boys as well as girls delight in being 'pirates', climbing and walking the plank on their 'voyage' around the garden while learning new vocabulary and developing their counting skills in mathematics.
- Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is developed well. Children have many planned opportunities to develop an awareness of life in modern Britain. Adults focus on developing the British values of respect and tolerance, equality and following the rules that make the school a harmonious place.
- Parents and carers feel very welcome at the school and appreciate the good quality help and care that their children receive. They particularly like the 'impact' activities that they complete at home with their children. These help children's learning because they link effectively to what children do in school. For example, the model boats that children had made at home were used in school to develop children's understanding of sinking and floating.
- All statutory requirements for safeguarding are met. School leaders are diligent in ensuring that all staff receive the most up-to-date information and training.
- The local authority has given good support to the school to help increase the pace of improvement. The early years adviser led training for governors in understanding information about children's achievement. She has assisted the headteacher in gaining an accurate view of the quality of the teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is much improved since the last inspection. Governors are better organised and more knowledgeable about the performance of the school. They have developed a clearer understanding of the quality of teaching and how well children achieve from the headteacher's reports.
 - Governors have undertaken appropriate training to help them check the provision for themselves which they now do more regularly. However, they do not always use the information from their visits to challenge leaders even more effectively about the quality of teaching and learning. This would help them to identify where further improvements can be made.
 - Governors know that the performance of the staff is being managed more rigorously and that good teaching is rewarded and any underperformance is tackled robustly. They set appropriately challenging targets for the headteacher's performance.
 - Governors manage their budget very carefully. They make sure that any additional funds are spent appropriately so that pupils receive the maximum benefit.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of children is outstanding. They play together extremely well, learning to share and help

each other where they can.

- Children are very curious about their world. They concentrate for long periods of time when following their own interests. They use their imagination extremely well in a range of activities, such as making a treasure map or exploring the texture of the muddy water in the garden kitchen.
- Children are helped to respect and listen carefully to adults and to each other. They understand when it is their turn to speak and when to listen quietly.
- These very positive attitudes to learning make a strong contribution to the better progress now being made.
- Children become independent very quickly because of the highly effective routines, consistently implemented by the adults. For example, snack time runs very smoothly because the children know how to serve their refreshments, and clear up after themselves without any fuss.
- The adults support the children very effectively in managing their feelings. Any upsets are sorted out quickly through focusing on the behaviour and the effect this has on others. Signs to represent emotions help those children who need support with their behaviour to understand others' feeling. As a result, activities continue without any disruption.
- The extra care provided for children at the start and end of the day, and at lunchtime, is well supervised with plenty for children to do. This ensures that children show the same exemplary behaviour as is evident during the rest of the day.
- Most children enjoy coming to school and attend well. The school leaders share the importance of regular attendance with parents and carers and work closely with families who find this difficult.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Policies and procedures are applied consistently across the school. Children's health and safety is checked rigorously and they are always well supervised.
- Parents and carers are very confident that their children are well looked after and happy at school. Warm and friendly relationships with staff are soon established and children settle to school quickly.
- It is a testament to the school's success in keeping children safe that there has been no discrimination, bullying or racist incidents in recent years.
- Risk is assessed carefully and staff monitor the play equipment daily to ensure there are no hazards. Children are taught how to take small risks, such as using the ear baffles when 'hammering' wood.
- Procedures for checking adults who work with children are secure and all visitors to school are checked carefully. The school site is very safe with robust systems in place to prevent any unauthorised access to the site.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good teaching has a positive impact on the learning of all groups of pupils. This, together with the strong leadership of teaching, has led to children's faster progress and better attainment.
- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection because now all the adults have high expectations of what children can achieve. Group activities are planned carefully to link the important areas of learning, with a good emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening skills.
- Teachers devise exciting activities that build effectively on children's interests, previous knowledge and skills. They ensure that the learning in group time is reflected in the play activities that children choose for themselves. This consistent approach is helping children to make faster progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants teach early reading, writing and mathematics well because of their improved subject knowledge. There is a consistency of practice across all key groups. Homework activities, such as sharing library books, ensure that children's learning is consolidated across these important areas.
- The teaching of phonics (sounds that letters make) is effective and helps children develop their early reading skills successfully. This is linked well to early writing, as was evident when children used their mark-making skills to make their treasure maps.
- Every opportunity is taken to promote children's mathematical skills through counting, recognising numbers and talking about shapes. Children are challenged to solve simple number problems to develop their understanding, for example, working out how many more steps are needed after eight to make nine.
- Adults promote effective learning by taking every opportunity to play alongside children and develop their language. They listen carefully to what children have to say and help to foster their interests.

- All adults question skilfully to ensure that children are suitably challenged in the group activities, including the most able. Further questioning and the adaptation of activities are not always used as effectively as they could be to extend children's learning and deepen their thinking. Good support provided for disabled children and those with special educational needs enables them to be fully included in the nursery. In addition, specialist support provided for children with language difficulties has a marked impact. As a result, these children make the same good progress as their classmates.
- Constant checks are made on how well children are learning. These assessments are recorded in the children's learning journey books together with photographs and examples of children's work. Staff are skilled in assessing the precise progress children are making both in daily activities and also over their time in school.
- Parents and carers are extremely positive about how the adults in school help their children to make good progress. They appreciate the regular opportunities to contribute to the learning journey books.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Most children enter the nursery school with the skills, knowledge and understanding typical for their age. Whatever their starting point, they make at least typical progress and most make good progress in all areas of learning.
- The very few children who enter school with skill levels below those typical for their age catch up quickly and the very large majority leave well equipped to enter the Reception class at their primary schools.
- Children make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and soon learn to become confident, independent learners.
- Since the previous inspection, the progress children make in their speaking and listening skills is much improved. This is due to the increased number of opportunities that children have to follow their interests and talk purposefully with adults about their ideas.
- Early reading skills are well developed. Books are readily available and children enjoy sitting with a friend or an adult and sharing a book, such as the Bear Hunt. Children are becoming increasingly confident in recognising and using initial sounds and letters when reading the stories they know out loud.
- Children's writing skills are developing well alongside their knowledge of letters and sounds. Children's mark-making is valued and they are encouraged to form their letters correctly when writing their names.
- Children's mathematical development is good. Frequently, they apply the skills learnt in group time to their own activities. For example, one child made up his own voyage as a pirate, carefully counting his 13 steps along the plank and saying how many more before he fell in the 'sea'. This helped to strengthen his understanding of numbers.
- The most able children are encouraged to use precise language to explain their thinking and speak out confidently to the whole group. However, sometimes they are not made to think hard enough about their ideas, which limits their progress.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs have very specific plans linked to their needs. Parents and carers are fully involved in setting targets for improvements, and as a result, these children are making good progress.
- Parents and carers are confident of the good progress their children are making.

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	113052
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	453540

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wendy Rees
Headteacher	Brian Lee
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 March 2013
Telephone number	01752 786444
Fax number	01752 793495
Email address	reception@plymbridge.net

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