

# Rothesay Nursery School

59 Rothesay Road, Luton LU1 1RB

<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 July 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher has successfully driven improvement since the previous inspection. Consequently, children's outcomes have improved steadily for the last three years and continue to improve.
- The curriculum is good because teachers and early years educators lead their subjects well. They frequently check children's progress and make improvements when needed.
- Teaching is consistently good. The progress of all groups of children from their starting points is good. The gaps are closing rapidly between disadvantaged children and all children nationally.
- Children identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from when they start at the Nursery. This is due to the good leadership of the special educational needs lead teacher and very effective individual learning plans and resources she has put in place.
- Governance is good because governors make regular, sharply focused visits to check the quality of education children receive. As a result, they challenge school leaders effectively and ensure that agreed improvements are implemented.
- Children are safe at the Nursery. There is no bullying of any kind and behaviour has improved due to the simple school rules that everyone understands. All adults apply these rules consistently throughout the school day.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the progress their children make and say they love learning. As one parent said, 'My child has a thirst for learning. The Nursery keeps children engaged, involved and happy in a very secure environment.'
- Most children are well prepared for their Reception Year in a new school. As one infant school leader said, 'Rothesay children are self-confident with peers and adults and settle really quickly'.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for the most able children to extend their reading and writing skills in a systematic way so they are better prepared for school.
- Written evidence of children's achievements in reading and writing does not illustrate these achievements clearly enough.
- Adults do not always plan additional activities to support children who are not quite ready for the activity or to extend those children who are ready to learn more.
- Teachers do not always give children time to consider and talk about what they have learned.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
  - teachers provide more opportunities for the most able children to extend their reading and writing skills in a systematic way so they are better prepared for school
  - all adults gather detailed and specific examples that effectively illustrate children's achievements in reading and writing
  - when adults plan learning activities, they consider and include something to support those children who are not ready to take part in the activity and extend those children who are ready to learn more
  - teachers give children opportunities to think about and reflect on their learning.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has been determined to make sure Rothesay Nursery is a good school that continues to improve. She has built a strong leadership team, enabling teachers and early years educators to develop their new leadership roles. Her high expectations, combined with good-quality support, means these leaders have grown in confidence and are successfully identifying and addressing any weaknesses in their subject areas.
- The new leader for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has made a considerable impact on improving the quality of provision and outcomes for these children. She knows the children well and their individual learning plans identify clearly how each specific need will be supported. For example, every child has a learning box with resources inside that are designed to support their progress.
- The quality of teaching has improved as a result of good professional development and robust performance management. Teachers and early years educators say they have benefited from observing each other work with the children as well as the opportunity to be filmed teaching their groups. Although this was 'scary' at first, it has enabled them to reflect on what works well and what does not work well. This has given them a new perspective on their teaching and helped them to improve.
- The headteacher checks the quality of teaching regularly. Her collaboration with the local leader of education has proved very helpful in ensuring that her judgements are accurate.
- The headteacher knows all the children in the Nursery exceptionally well. This knowledge enables her to make regular checks on their 'learning journeys', track their progress from when they started at Nursery and challenge staff if a child appears to be 'stuck' in any aspect of learning. She has recently identified that the quality of evidence about children's reading and writing skills is not detailed enough.
- The curriculum is interesting and captures children's imagination because it is based on their interests and enthusiasms. For example, during the inspection children wanted to find out more about snails. Their fascination and commitment to learning was clear in the beautiful and detailed drawings of older children and the wide-eyed expressions of the youngest children as they gently stroked the snail's delicate shell. Children's good spiritual development is supported by their sheer enjoyment of all the learning opportunities offered to them.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from the 'magic room' where they explore different lights and sounds, helping them to get excited about learning. The soft play area provides a safe environment for all children to crawl, climb and jump on the many shapes and sizes of colourful cushions. This supports physical development well, encouraging children to challenge themselves in how to climb up to the next level or find different routes around the area.
- Subject leaders ensure that as well as following their special interests, children get a broad knowledge and understanding of the world they live in. For example, there are many opportunities to celebrate the cultural heritage of the different ethnic groups represented in the school. This is underpinned by a strong emphasis on British values, for example through the recent 'parliament time' when children voted for which activities they would like included in their learning opportunities the next day.
- Children's good cultural development is also supported through the time they spend in the music room learning to use a wide range of musical instruments. A recent visit to the ballet, supported by early years pupil premium funding, opened the children's eyes to the beauty of dance and inspired them to explore how they can be dancers.
- Children who are moving on to Reception classes are given good opportunities to get used to new routines. For example, at lunchtime they use trays and are expected to clear away after themselves. Early years leaders in feeder schools comment on how well prepared children are for the next stage in their education.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors have worked well with the headteacher to ensure Rothesay is a good school. They have taken on board local authority advice and support and helped senior leaders to keep their eyes fixed on well-targeted school improvement.
  - Governors set challenging targets for children's outcomes, which have supported rapid and sustained improvement since the previous inspection. Because of their regular visits and senior leaders' accurate self-evaluation, they know that the school is heading in the right direction.
  - Governors have approved how early years pupil premium funds are spent and have checked the impact of this spending.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and the single central register meets requirements. The family worker liaises effectively with parents and external agencies to ensure that children are safe and their families receive the level of support they need.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment** is good

- Adults create beautiful and fascinating learning spaces for children to explore inside and outside the building. In every session, there are opportunities for children to practise the skills they must learn to be successful in their lives. The outside 'garden' area has a wealth of resources to inspire learning. Adults are carefully deployed and quick to spot opportunities to question or talk to children about what they have chosen to do.
- Adult-led activities are carefully planned to develop key skills with a very strong focus on developing children's communication and language skills. The menus of words beside each activity enable adults to extend children's vocabulary and deepen their understanding of new ideas. However, the activities do not always include something to support those children who are not ready to take part in the activity or extend those who are ready to learn more. For example, in one activity children explored how to make marks in a sand tray. A few children were not ready to focus on this and just wanted to run the sand through their fingers while one child was ready to make delicate marks and intricate patterns.
- Teachers and early years educators are very skilled at making the most of learning opportunities that arise during a session. For example, when a child picked up a tape measure this developed into a measuring activity that involved a group of children measuring each other. There are many opportunities throughout the Nursery session for pupils to develop their number skills, and this contributes to their good outcomes in mathematics.
- Children love books and really enjoy hearing stories and reciting repeated patterns of words. Although children learn phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) and have a go at writing about activities throughout a session, there are not sufficient opportunities, particularly for the most able older children, to extend their reading and writing skills in a systematic way so they are better prepared for school.
- Staff have a rigorous approach to checking children's progress. Weekly meetings involving all adults in the Nursery are proving very effective because adults quickly identify any children who are not making the progress they are capable of.
- Assessment is accurate, moderated by other schools and the local authority, and all adults write about children's learning during a session. Most of these records of children's learning are useful and illustrate what they can do but records of children's achievements in reading and writing do not always give as clear a picture of children's abilities.
- Every busy Nursery session ends with a peaceful gathering of children with their teacher. The time is used well, but children do not always get the opportunity to reflect on what they have learned about or explain this to the teacher or the other children in their group.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare** is good

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote children's personal development and welfare is good.
- Children are confident and feel completely safe because adults create a safe place for them to learn and play. Each child knows who their key worker is and adults are skilled at developing strong relationships with the children in their care. As a result, children rapidly become self-confident and do not worry about leaving their parent or carer.
- Throughout their session in Nursery, children have the opportunity to choose from a wide range of different and exciting activities. It is a mark of how effective the school is in developing children's good moral and social understanding that they are able to make good and safe choices for most of the session. For example, during the inspection children walked up and down the narrow stairs safely and without any fuss. The outside area was always busy and had a purposeful and orderly atmosphere.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of children is good.
- Every child knows the school rules and routines and is able to make safe choices. Children who arrive at the school with no English rapidly understand what is expected of them. For example, staff use various sequences of photographs that show this clearly. Children like the signing all adults use. They pick this up very quickly and are soon teaching their parents the school rules using their new signing skills.
- Children are very quick to follow adults' instructions. Children new to the Nursery rapidly pick up the concept of sharing and turn-taking because they can see that their turn will come.
- Attendance is continuing to improve because the school has robust and effective systems to encourage parents to bring their children to Nursery every day. Furthermore, children love coming to Nursery. One parent explained that if their child misbehaves at home all they have to say is, 'You won't be able to go to Nursery tomorrow', and the child stops immediately.

## Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Children's outcomes have improved consistently over the last three years in all the areas of learning. The school's records are supported by information from the local authority and evidence of learning over time in children's 'learning journeys'.
- Most children start at Nursery with skills and understanding below those of children of a similar age. This is because most arrive with very little or no English.
- All children make good progress, as a result of good teaching and the good curriculum. The majority of children leave the Nursery with knowledge, skills and understanding similar to other children of the same age. The school is successfully closing the gap between disadvantaged children and all children nationally.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points due to the good resources designed to help them and the effective support and training given by the special needs lead teacher to all the adults who work with these children.
- The school rightly places a strong focus on developing children's communication and language skills and their personal, social and emotional development. Consequently, children make rapid progress in these areas. The curriculum allows children to successfully explore all the other areas of learning so progress is also good in these aspects of learning.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109419
<b>Local authority</b>	Luton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10011807

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	173
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jonathan Lodge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Janet Brownjohn
<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 726 966
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://rothesaynursery.co.uk">rothesaynursery.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@rothesay.nurseryluton.com">admin@rothesay.nurseryluton.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11–12 June 2014

## Information about this school

- This larger-than-average Nursery school provides part-time places for 173 children. Children attend for three hours daily or use their 15 hours over two and a half days.
- The proportion of disadvantaged children known to be eligible for support through the early years pupil premium is around average. The early years pupil premium is additional funding for three- and four-year-old children whose families are known to be eligible for additional government support and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Children come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. The majority speak English as an additional language. This is high compared to other Nursery schools. There are 25 different languages represented in the school.
- An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. High numbers of children join or leave the Nursery during the year. Some are new arrivals to the country or are referred to the Nursery by health or social care professionals. Others move on to other schools in Luton.
- A local leader of education from Hillborough Infants School is supporting the school.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed a range of teaching and learning and parts of lessons. Some observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Throughout the inspection, inspectors spoke with children informally and formally, about their learning and safety in the school.
- Inspectors read with a few older children and talked to a group about their understanding of phonics.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the leader for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and teachers and early years educators responsible for other curriculum subjects. In addition, inspectors held meetings with representatives from the local authority and the governing body.
- Inspectors looked at the school's review of its own performance, its development and improvement plan, school policies, curriculum planning and minutes of governing body meetings. Inspectors considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors scrutinised children's work in lessons and analysed a sample of children's learning journeys.
- The inspectors evaluated 18 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and 19 free text messages. Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day and to a group of parents.
- Inspectors considered 19 responses to the online staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Julie Winyard, lead inspector  
Robert Greatrex

Her Majesty's Inspector  
Ofsted Inspector

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