

# Tenterfield Nursery School

London Road, Welwyn, Hertfordshire AL6 9JF

## Inspection dates

22–23 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- Tenterfield Nursery succeeds in its aim to make sure that 'everyone shines'. From the moment children arrive until they go home, no time is wasted in achieving this goal.
- The school continues to provide children with an outstanding start to their education.
- The co-headteachers form a highly effective team. They are well supported by the assistant headteacher, other staff and governors.
- Children enter the nursery with a wide range of starting points. They make excellent progress and are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The nursery has rightly earned a reputation for enabling children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to thrive.
- The interesting activities, and the many imaginative ways staff find to present them, capture children's curiosity and fascination.
- Leaders and staff use assessment very effectively to make sure that children are always challenged to do well.
- Staff form a highly effective and cohesive team. They know how to get the best from children.
- Children say they feel very happy and safe at school and their parents agree with them.
- Children's personal development is exceptional because they are given the appropriate support and challenge to excel.
- The school builds very strong relationships with parents. One parent, typical of many, said, 'I thank my lucky stars my child has spent a year at Tenterfield, a truly exceptional nursery.'
- Staff provide some useful information and guidance for parents to find out how to support their children's learning at home. Parents find this helpful and would like more.
- Most children attend very regularly, but a few children, generally those that are vulnerable or disadvantaged, are too often absent from nursery school.

## **Full report**

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

- Seek to build further on the strong relationship with parents to benefit their children's education, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged children, by:
  - providing parents with even more of the information they need to better support their children's learning out of school
  - emphasising how important it is that their children attend school regularly.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The co-headteachers' drive and ambition for the nursery mean that previous strengths have been maintained, and further improvements added. All staff responding to Ofsted's online survey agreed that the school has improved since the previous inspection.
- Leaders form a highly effective team. Each leader brings different skills, experience and expertise 'to the table' and, collectively, they bring out the best in one another. The very few areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report have been fully resolved by determined leadership.
- Leaders' accurate assessments help them to see if any child is falling behind and to ensure that they receive the help they need to catch up.
- Staff views are valued; everyone contributes. As a result, everyone knows and understands the school's priorities, and how they are to be achieved. All staff responding to Ofsted's survey said they strongly agree that they have a clear understanding of the goals the school is aiming to achieve.
- The nursery runs like clockwork, because teamwork among staff is outstanding. All members of staff fully understand their roles.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching, and give staff helpful hints to improve. Staff know they will be given the guidance and support they need. Every member of staff responding to Ofsted's online survey strongly agreed that leaders use training effectively to support staff improvement.
- Excellent key workers are fundamental to the high-quality learning and care. Children's relationships with all staff are very positive, but with their key worker particularly so. Key workers share a similarly positive relationship with parents. Children gain confidence from seeing these adults working so closely together.
- The outstanding curriculum builds on children's interests and experiences. Indoors and out, children have a very wide range of resources and equipment to choose what suits their purpose best. In each area, staff provide activities to challenge children to do as well as they can. There is always something happening; parents said their children cannot wait to get to school each day to see what fascinating tasks are waiting for them.
- Tenterfield Nursery is fully inclusive, resulting in outstanding support and guidance for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The provision is managed superbly. The excellent knowledge and understanding of the special educational needs coordinator benefits children because funds are used highly effectively to meet each child's needs. Staff have the training they need and benefit from a wealth of practical ideas.
- Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. For example, various animals and insects regularly visit the nursery. Children's awe at seeing the life cycle of the butterfly gives them a sense of wonder. All children are involved in writing

the rules for how these creatures will be treated.

- British values are woven into the nursery's everyday life. Staff, in their actions as well as their words, demonstrate British values. They lead by example, showing respect for everyone, their school and its equipment. Children follow this example.
- Leaders' highly effective use of the small amount of early years pupil premium funding ensures that the vast majority of disadvantaged children, including those who are most able, flourish. For example, funding is provided to visit parents to give them the help they need to support their children's learning at home.
- Excellent links with the children's centre are particularly beneficial. Both parents and their children benefit from education, health and social care coming together to provide seamless support. Links with other external agencies are equally strong.
- Nursery and wraparound care work as one. As a result, transition from one to the other is seamless. Children enjoy high-quality learning in both aspects.
- Relationships with parents are outstanding. Every parent responding to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, would recommend the school to another parent. To each and every question about all aspects of the nursery, parents unequivocally answered 'yes'.
- The local authority recognises that the nursery is highly effective. The nursery is often recommended to other practitioners as a centre of excellence.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governance is highly effective. Governors are highly motivated and have used their individual skills to form a highly efficient team. They see themselves as custodians of this outstanding nursery school, determined to pass it on to their successors in the same outstanding state they received it.
- Governors leave no stone unturned in their desire to improve the school further. For example, they noticed the number of children on roll was falling and so improved the marketing of the school.
- Governors embraced the opportunity of the new funding arrangements. Their clear plan is already being implemented, so the school is well placed to serve the community.
- Governors check the use of additional funding, such as the early years pupil premium, to make sure spending is making a positive difference for children.
- Governors oversee closely the performance of staff, including the co-headteachers.
- Governors ensure that all statutory responsibilities, including those relating to safeguarding, are met.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Governors, leaders and staff share a culture which ensures that children's safety and safeguarding are foremost in every adult's thinking.

- Leaders ensure that training, such as in child protection and the 'Prevent' duty, is up to date. As a result, all staff have a good awareness of what to look for in order to keep children safe.
- Staff said they are confident in raising any concerns. The procedures for this are clear and followed rigorously.
- Every parent responding to their online survey agreed that their children feel safe in school.
- Excellent links with the onsite children's centre, and other local agencies, enable staff to seek extra help quickly to support families in difficulty.
- Checks on the suitability of staff, governors, volunteers and contractors are thorough and documentation comprehensive.

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

### **Outstanding**

- Fundamental to the outstanding teaching is the positive and trusting relationships children have with staff. All staff responding to their online survey agreed that the school has a culture that encourages calm and orderly conduct.
- Every parent responding to Ofsted's online survey agreed, and almost every parent strongly agreed, that their children are taught well at Tenterfield Nursery. A typical comment was, 'The staff are exceptional, they provide numerous, lovely activities that encourage children to play, explore and investigate.'
- Carefully planned tasks fire children's imagination and challenge them to think 'why?' For example, ice was hung in the woodland so children could experience it melting.
- Children arrive and immediately immerse themselves in learning. Each session has a structure that children fully understand. Everything is logically and sensibly organised to support children's learning and development. For example, the first 'busy fingers' activity gets children settled and focused.
- Each day's learning is purposeful and engaging because it is planned following checks on children's previous learning. One group, for example, who had built a pirate ship arrived the next day to find a letter from the pirates with a challenge to further extend the previous day's learning.
- Children enjoy quality time with their key workers who plan these short sessions to focus on each individual child's needs and interests. Very often, children choose to consolidate or extend this learning afterwards.
- Speaking and listening skills are promoted effectively by all staff. Everything, whether forming a circle or tidying up, has a song associated with it that children join in heartily. Staff's consistent use of signing gives pupils visual cues linked to the spoken word.
- Early reading skills are taught particularly well. Staff take every opportunity to emphasise the link between letters and the sounds they make.
- Staff promote mark-making very effectively. Children's activities generally include something, such as a whiteboard, on which they can record their thoughts.

- Staff foster children’s understanding of number very skilfully. During the inspection, one group explored two- and three-dimensional shapes, using their excellent observational and speaking and listening skills to articulate similarities and differences.
- The most able children are catered for superbly. Key workers make a note of children showing particular aptitude so they can participate in a further activity that day, while the learning is fresh. During the inspection, one such group deepened their understanding of number. They looked at ‘more than’ and ‘less than’, counted in tens, and even had a brief conversation about what is less than zero, using the example of a thermometer.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities thrive because they are taught so well. All staff, but particularly their key worker, thoroughly understand their needs and how best to meet them.
- Staff work very closely with parents. Key workers’ regular feedback ensures that parents understand their children’s progress. Parents appreciate the information sessions and would welcome more to help them know how to better help their children learn out of school.

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

**Outstanding**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school’s work to promote children’s personal development and welfare is outstanding. Every parent responding to Ofsted’s online survey agreed that their child is happy at school, and a very high proportion – 19 in every 20 – strongly agreed.
- Key to the school’s effectiveness is the thorough induction given to children when they first arrive. Children are taught what is expected of them, and what they can expect of the school’s staff. The routines and rules, and the reasons for them, are clearly explained and understood.
- Children want to learn, partly because it is so much fun. Each day, they are keen and eager to see what staff have planned for them.
- Children proudly accept any and all responsibility. Equipment and resources in the excellent indoor and outdoor spaces are organised so children can choose for themselves what they feel will help them to learn best. They enjoy helping. They organise their own snack-times; they wash their hands, gather fruit and drink and clear up afterwards.
- Very positive relationships between children and staff, and the caring culture of the school, help children to know they will be listened to should they have any worries or concerns. Nine out of ten parents responding to the survey strongly agreed that their children are well looked after at school.
- Children’s individual needs are met superbly. Excellent provision, in both the nurture group and sensory room, enables children to develop self-confidence and learn to understand and manage their feelings better.
- Parents remark that staff ‘go the extra mile’ to provide exceptional care and attention

to detail so each and every child's needs are met, whatever they might be.

- Children's understanding of how to stay safe, and keep others safe, is excellent. Staff carefully teach the rules, and why the rules are there. As a result, children understand and follow the rules autonomously and automatically. For example, they put safety goggles on when sawing and hammering and a cycle helmet when using the trikes. At an age-appropriate level, they understand how to stay safe using the internet.
- Transitions are excellent. From the home visit before children start, staff get to know all about them. Parents say the transition when children leave is also very smooth. The preparation for schools receiving children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is very thorough.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of children is outstanding. Every parent responding to Ofsted's online survey agreed that the school makes sure its children are well behaved, and everyone expressing a view agreed that the school deals effectively with bullying.
- Staff's consistently high expectations builds on the values taught to the children in the home. Children respond exceptionally well.
- Tenterfield is a harmonious community. Children love learning with their friends. They share, take turns and chat to one another about their learning.
- Children are very proud of their school. They treat equipment with great care and very willingly join in to tidy up.
- Most families bring their children to school very regularly. Some parents made comments such as, 'She can't wait to get here!' The school checks attendance regularly and takes swift action to help any struggling family. Even so, the attendance of a few children, particularly those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged, is significantly lower than others in the school.

## **Outcomes for pupils**

## **Outstanding**

- Children enter the nursery with a wide range of starting points. Work in children's learning journals, their 'special learning books', and the school's information about children's progress show that children currently in the school continue to make outstanding progress overall. In their responses to Ofsted's online survey, every parent agreed, and nine out of ten strongly agreed that their children make good progress at the school.
- Staff are very adept at 'tuning into' children's thinking, so they know how to guide and support children's outstanding progress.
- Children learn how to figure things out for themselves and build their problem-solving skills. During 'tidy up time', for example, two girls were stumped. They needed to unhook a bag, but it was higher than they were. Excellent questioning by staff enabled the girls to see they needed to make themselves taller. They looked around, found something sensible to stand on, and succeeded.

- The small proportion of children who speak English as an additional language thrive, generally because key vocabulary is taught so clearly, often with staff signing, or showing a matching picture as they say the words. Children's home language is acknowledged and used alongside English in their everyday learning. Staff ensure that suitable reading books in every child's home language are readily accessible.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make exceptional progress, often from low starting points. Parents spoke about huge improvements in their children's progress, in both their academic and personal development, because their needs are so carefully analysed and then provided for.
- Disadvantaged children, including the most able disadvantaged children, who attend well also thrive. Additional funding is used imaginatively to give children the help they need, for example individual coaching for parents, tailored to their needs.
- The most able children do well. They are invited to try harder work. One child told the inspector, 'This is my special challenge to help me do my best.'



## School details

Unique reference number	117078
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10023557

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Taunton
Co-headteachers	Hannah Isher and Megan Wilcox
Telephone number	01438 714564
Website	<a href="http://www.tenterfield.herts.sch.uk">www.tenterfield.herts.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@tenterfield.herts.sch.uk">head@tenterfield.herts.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	27–28 February 2014

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is led by two co-headteachers.
- Children attend the nursery part time for five half-day sessions per week. Most join in September and have three terms in nursery before moving on to primary school. A small number of children who are likely to benefit from spending longer in nursery are admitted in January, and stay for five terms.
- The vast majority of children come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. However, the proportion who have education, health and care plans is

above average.

- The nursery provides additional childcare through its breakfast club, wraparound care, tea club and a holiday club.
- The nursery is the lead agency for Welwyn and Knebworth Children's Centre Group, which is based on the same site but inspected separately.
- From September 2017, the nursery will offer 30-hour placements to eligible three- and four-year-olds. In addition, a small number of funded two-year-old places will be available in autumn 2017.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited all teaching groups. Some visits were conducted jointly with the co-headteachers. In addition, the inspector observed small groups of children being taught.
- The inspector looked at work in children's learning journals ('special learning books') and listened to children read.
- The inspector observed children in other activities and as they moved around the school and site.
- The inspector held meetings with the co-headteachers, other leaders, teachers, other staff and governors. The inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority and the manager of the children's centre.
- The inspector asked children about their experiences at school.
- The views of 34 parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account. The inspector also held informal discussions with parents. The inspector considered the views of eight members of staff who responded to their survey. No children responded.
- The inspector looked at a range of school documents and information. These included the school's development plan, checks on the quality of teaching, curriculum plans, minutes of meetings of the governing body, and children's behaviour and attendance records. The inspector also looked at arrangements for safeguarding procedures, including relevant records.

## Inspection team

Robert Greatrex, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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