

Inspection of The Gill Blowers Nursery School

1 Mossdale Court, Teesdale, Luton, Bedfordshire LU4 9JL

Inspection dates: 28–29 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders and staff know each individual child in this happy, welcoming school. The atmosphere is calm and secure. This is a place where children can be children and enjoy learning.

Children behave well. Staff expect children to listen carefully and follow instructions. Children rise to the occasion. They are interested in their learning and enjoy the well-deserved praise they receive for taking part and doing their best.

Children feel safe and know that staff will look after them. They start by developing a strong bond with their key person. Quickly, children form positive relationships with other staff. From often low starting points, children grow quickly into more confident and independent learners.

Leaders and staff work hard with parents and carers. They produce a lot of information about the day-to-day life of the school. Leaders also provide ideas for parents to support their children's learning. However, leaders do not make sure this is shared and understood by all parents.

Leaders and governors work with dedication and determination to improve the school. Middle leaders share good practice and support staff successfully so that children across both the Leabank and Mossdale sites receive the same high-quality education.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The headteacher leads very well. She is ably supported by senior and middle leaders. They share her love of the school and her ambition to make it the very best possible. Leaders, including governors, understand what works well and what needs to be better.

Leaders have strengthened the quality of education throughout the school. They have thought carefully about what they want children to learn and how best to make this happen. They have combined high expectations for all children with a curriculum that builds on children's knowledge and skills.

Early reading is taught effectively. Children enjoy looking at books, listening to stories and singing rhymes. When they are ready, children are taught phonics through a structured and engaging approach. As a result, standards in early reading are rising.

Many children arrive at the school unable to communicate well. Staff use signing to help children share their ideas and feelings. Staff encourage children to talk as they play, modelling new words for children to learn. In the classes for two- and three-year-olds, we saw staff skilfully introduce and reinforce simple language through the stories 'Whatever next!' and 'We're going on a bear hunt'. While this improving

picture is the case, children who speak English as an additional language do not develop their speaking skills as quickly as they should.

In mathematics, staff plan activities both indoors and outside that help children to build their understanding of numbers and shapes. We saw children in a class for three- and four-year-olds accurately counting the spots on giant dominoes. Other children were using language such as 'inside' and 'under' as they built a rail track out of wooden bricks.

Staff use consistent routines. Staff sing familiar rhymes with children to help them move on to the next activity. Only gentle reminders are needed when children take too long to settle down.

Teachers adapt curriculum plans so that most children gain good knowledge and understanding across all areas of learning. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those from the resourced provision, benefit from these adaptations. The children enjoy learning and experience success.

The curriculum includes a wide range of events that open up and enrich children's experiences of the world. During a 'wow Wednesday' session, children excitedly made bird feeders with their parents. Children complete 'culture wheels' at home that illustrate what is important to them and their families. Children celebrate different festivals, including Diwali and Chinese New Year. Staff support children to practise real-life skills, such as cutting up fruit snacks and using hammers and nails. These experiences enable children to identify and manage risks in a safe manner. This also strengthens their understanding of the world around them.

Governors have a broad range of knowledge and skills. They use these to support and challenge leaders. Leaders take care of staff well. Staff feel supported and appreciated. Staff are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Keeping children safe is at the heart of the school's work. Leaders make sure the school is a safe environment for children.

Leaders carry out thorough checks to make sure that all adults in school are suitable to work with children. All staff are well trained in spotting signs that children may be at risk. Staff are confident in the steps they take to record and report any concerns.

Leaders work closely with external agencies so that referrals for extra help are timely and appropriate. The family worker's effective actions ensure that families who need extra help are supported to care for their children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Children who speak English as an additional language do not develop language skills across the different areas of learning as quickly as they should. Leaders need to make sure that these children learn to speak confidently and fluently, using the new vocabulary they hear, so that they have a strong foundation for their future learning, particularly in reading.
- Some parents do not understand the work of the school. They do not know enough about what their children are learning and how their children learn. Leaders need to make sure that the different ways they communicate are accessible to all parents, so that parents have the information and help they need to support their children's learning at home.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	131175
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10121362
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sasha Smith
Headteacher	Joanne Iddenden
Website	www.gillblowersnursery.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized nursery school. It is based on two sites, about a mile and a half apart, known as the Mossdale and Leabank sites. The accommodation on each site is at the base of a block of flats.
- The proportion of children who speak English as an additional language is above the national average. Some children are at the early stages of learning to speak English.
- The proportion of children with SEND is above the national average. The school has specially resourced provision, which provides up to 12 part-time places for children with severe and complex learning needs.
- The proportion of children for whom the school receives the early years pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The school has experienced several changes since the previous inspection. The school no longer admits children up to two years old, but now admits children from two- to four years old on both the Leabank and Mossdale sites.

- The current headteacher, who was the deputy headteacher at the time of the previous inspection, became interim headteacher in February 2018. She took up the substantive role of headteacher in April 2019.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- As part of this inspection, we held meetings with the headteacher (who is also the designated safeguarding leader and the special educational needs coordinator), the SEND team, the middle leaders (who are also the curriculum leaders), the school business manager, and the family worker.
- I met with the chair of the governing body and four other governors. Additionally, I met with a local authority adviser to discuss their work with the school.
- We did deep dives in these areas of learning: communication, language and literacy, mathematics, understanding the world, and personal, social and emotional development. We visited lessons, looked at a range of children's work and met with teachers.
- We scrutinised the school's website and a range of school documents, including the school's own evaluation, improvement plans, curriculum plans, and records about attendance, behaviour and safeguarding children.
- We considered the 10 responses made by parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 10 responses to Ofsted's free-text facility. We also spoke to some parents during the inspection. Additionally, we took account of the 31 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.

Inspection team

Fiona Webb, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Joan Beale

Ofsted Inspector

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