



Rubery Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103131
LEA Birmingham
Inspection number 276851
Inspection dates 24 May 2006 to 24 May 2006
Reporting inspector Hazel Callaghan AI

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Leybrook Road
School category	Maintained		Rednal
Age range of pupils	3 to 4		Birmingham, West Midlands B45 9PB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 4642158
Number on roll	80	Fax number	0121 4643327
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr S Bennett
Date of previous inspection	6 December 1999	Headteacher	Mrs J Shiner

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Rubery Nursery is a large school with 80 children attending full time. Most children come from families of White British descent and there is none learning English as an additional language. Children's attainment when they start at the nursery is varied but overall standards are below those expected for their age. A significant number of children have difficulties in their speech and language and the personal and social skills of many are not sufficiently developed. The school identifies a high proportion of children as having learning difficulties and disabilities (40%). Over the last two years, the school has gone through a very difficult time resulting in significant staffing changes. A new headteacher took up post in January supported by an acting deputy headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Rubery Nursery School provides a satisfactory education for its children. Children make good progress in their personal development and well-being because staff provide good levels of pastoral care and relationships throughout the school are very good. Teaching is satisfactory and this leads to children's satisfactory progress in their learning. There is a good range of activities to promote children's learning, but the structure of the day does not give children sufficient time to understand what is to be learnt or to evaluate what they have done. Teachers have a good understanding of children's personal development but procedures for assessing children's work across other areas of learning are weak. Consequently, there are few data by which children's progress can be monitored and evaluated. This slows the identification of any weakness in teaching and learning. Leadership and management are satisfactory. A new headteacher has recently taken post and she has carried out effective recent self-evaluation, seeking the views of parents, and has identified areas for development correctly. Her evaluations of the school's effectiveness are accurate, but there has been no time yet for major improvements. Currently, only two senior staff carry the management of the whole school. Plans for the more efficient deployment of responsibilities when a third senior teacher joins the management team next term have been explored but not yet fully defined. The headteacher has already had an impact on several areas of school development and there are clear indications that the staff are well placed to improve further. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

Make time for explaining the purpose of teacher-led activities so children understand what they are to learn and for children to review and evaluate their work. Develop comprehensive systems for assessing children's work so their progress can be monitored and data analysed to evaluate the quality of learning. Ensure that management responsibilities are effectively deployed so that school improvement moves forward quickly.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children's achievement in their learning is satisfactory. Progress in their personal and social development is good.

When children start at the nursery, their standards in speech and language are generally below those expected for their age. A significant number also find difficulty in playing sensibly with other children and show low levels of concentration and independence. Good support enables all children to settle well and the staff's sensitive care and consistent approaches enable children to make good progress in their personal, emotional and social development. This aspect of children's development is of prime importance, as it prepares them for future learning and enables them to tackle their activities with confidence. Satisfactory progress is made in other areas of learning.

This is mainly because targets for children's future learning in language and literacy and in their mathematical development are not sufficiently well planned and provide inconsistent levels of challenge.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress towards their individual targets. Where these targets are carefully structured, good achievement is made. Over the last term, the potentially higher-attaining children have been given additional support in language and this is already beginning to promote their better progress. However, this initiative is still very recent and the achievement of these children remains satisfactory across all areas of learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development and well-being are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although more could be done to develop children's awareness of other cultures and beliefs.

Children behave well because of the high expectations shown by all adults and the very good relationships through the school. Children enjoy school and most attend regularly. They show care and consideration for each other and usually share toys and resources happily. Children are developing good levels of independence and their attitudes to their work are good. They work confidently by themselves or with other children, showing good levels of attention. Children make a satisfactory contribution to the life of the school. They follow school routines and most help to tidy up after their activities. When given the opportunity, children make suggestions about how to make things better, such as how to improve the role play areas. Children recognise the importance of eating healthily and understand how to keep safe. They are careful when using a range of equipment such as the climbing frame and when using tools in the 'Forest School'. Children are developing a satisfactory range of important skills, such as independence and cooperation, that will help them in their future education and the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Staff work together as a supportive team to provide a wide range of activities that will stimulate children's interest and curiosity. Good quality resources are made available so that children's independence and self-organisation are promoted. Children's learning is satisfactorily supported through well-chosen questions. However, activities are not sufficiently structured to give time for children to evaluate and improve their tasks. Teacher-led activities are not clearly introduced to children so they can focus on the purpose of the activities and develop an understanding of themselves as learners. Systems to monitor children's progress are inadequate. Insufficient information is collected about children's standards or

progress to ensure that their academic needs are fully met. The targets set for their future development are often too vague to be supportive except in children's personal and social development.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and it is enriched by a range of additional activities. There is a satisfactory balance between adult-led tasks and opportunities for children to develop their knowledge and skills through their own choice of activities. The school's recent development of an area of woodland called the 'Forest School' is successfully developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world. One parent commented that her child now sees things he never saw before because of his time at the 'Forest School'. Children's experiences are also extended by visits out of the nursery and by visitors, such as theatre groups. The headteacher has provided strong leadership in the promotion of healthy lifestyles, especially in children's understanding of healthy food. The curriculum is satisfactorily adapted to meet the needs of all children but information about children's learning is not sufficiently monitored to ensure that activities always provide sufficient challenge.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support provided to children are satisfactory. Pastoral care for all children is good and their personal needs are successfully met. Support and guidance for their academic progress are satisfactory. The sensitive induction of children into the school enables them to settle quickly and, as a result, children get off to a good start. Child protection arrangements are satisfactory and in the process of further improvement. The school is a very secure area and parents are confident that their children are safe and well cared for. There are consistent and effective strategies for supporting children's personal, emotional and social development and teachers accurately identify the areas of children's development that need greater support. Targets for these areas of development are satisfactorily planned and consistent levels of guidance are given so that children progress well. Children's learning in other areas of the curriculum is not sufficiently well monitored and targets for their next stage of development are not clearly identified.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory but aspects of monitoring and evaluating the school's performance have not kept pace with expected standards. There is little information about how children's learning is progressing and this slows the identification of areas of development in teaching and learning. The new headteacher is very aware of these weaknesses but has not yet had time to bring about improvements.

The school has been through a difficult period of time, with significant changes in staff. Currently, only two senior staff carry the management of the school. This creates a heavy load, especially as several staff are new to the profession and need some support. Plans are being made for the more efficient deployment of responsibilities when the new deputy headteacher takes up post next term. The school has carried out effective recent self-evaluation, seeking the views of parents, and has noted strengths and areas for development accurately. The governing body is still fairly new but there are several governors whose expertise is well used to support the school. They provide a satisfactory overview of the school's strategic development.

The headteacher has already had a positive influence, especially within the curriculum. The school's strong promotion of healthy eating, the development of the 'Forest School' and introduction of sessions for the more able are the result of the headteacher's leadership. Together, the staff are becoming more evaluative of their work and are united in their commitment to improvement. All these are clear indications that the school is well placed to move forward further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to say thank you for making us feel welcome in your school and for helping us with our questions. We really enjoyed chatting to you and found everything you said very interesting. I thought you would like to know what we found out about your school.

What we liked about the school

It is a happy school where you enjoy your activities because the staff help you and make your work interesting. You get on well with each other and with the adults in the school and most of you behave sensibly and are kind to each other. We think you try hard to do well in your work. You understand how important it is to keep safe and to eat things that are good for you. You are given jobs to do and you try to do them well. All the grown-ups look after you well and help you feel safe. The school works very closely with your families.

What we have asked the school to do

We have asked the teachers to make time for you to discuss the activities they are giving you to do, and to give you time to think about what you have been doing so you can make your work better. We have asked your teachers to look closely at how well you are getting on so they know how to help you make better progress. We have asked your headteacher to give some different jobs to the adults in the school so they all help to make it work really well.

Thank you again for being so friendly.