

Rosemary Nursery School and Family Unit

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108898
Local Authority	Bristol, City of
Inspection number	288220
Inspection date	4 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Brenda Spencer

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2-5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Leigh Anderson
Headteacher	Toni Glazzard
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2002
School address	Haviland House St Judes Flats Bristol BS2 0DT
Telephone number	0117 9031467
Fax number	0117 9031468

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Rosemary is a nursery school and family unit situated in a densely populated estate of local authority housing within inner city Bristol. It is one of three linked settings which together form Easton Children's Centre. This setting provides day care for children aged two to three years and nursery education for three- to four-year-olds. The extended services on offer include parental support and family learning programmes, English for speakers of other languages and the regular support of a speech and language therapist. Nearly all Nursery children have Caribbean, African or mixed heritage. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is high. There are also a high number of children who speak English as an additional language, some of whom are refugees or asylum seekers. The predominant languages of these children are Somali and Bengali. The headteacher was seconded to the setting on a temporary basis in September 2006 and made substantive in March 2007. This followed a prolonged period when there were considerable difficulties with recruitment. During this time the previous headteacher remained in post to provide stability for the setting.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Rosemary Nursery School and Family Unit provides a satisfactory education which is rapidly improving. It has earned overwhelming support from parents. The newly appointed headteacher, with good support from staff and governors, is leading the school well. Finances are being well used to redesign the accommodation to extend and better integrate the range of services on offer. Policies and aims are under review to make sure there is coherence in the experience of families using the nursery school and family unit. Staff are enthusiastically embracing opportunities for professional development and many are pursuing early years degrees. More importantly, they are implementing what they have learned. As a result, for example, provision and achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) and work with families has improved. Impressive efforts are made to work with health and social services to meet the complex needs of families and individual children.

Children enter with poor communication and social skills. Very many do not speak English. Standards improve so by the end of nursery, standards are below expectations in communication and mathematical development and are broadly as expected in personal, social and emotional development. Children achieve satisfactorily. However, there is an uneven picture of achievement as a result of inconsistent use of assessment to plan the next steps in learning. This is done well to shape the focus of small group work, but in whole-class activities, children's individual needs are not successfully met. The quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum and the care, guidance and support children receive are all satisfactory but have strong features. Children's welfare is very well supported, the enrichment of the curriculum through visits is good and the development of children's spoken language and self-confidence is effective. Consequently, children's personal development and well-being are good. Particularly strong are their enjoyment of school, adoption of a healthy lifestyle and their sense of security. Provision for children's physical development is good and as a result they make good progress in this area to reach expected standards.

Leadership and management are good. The setting improvement plan highlights appropriate priorities to improve provision and children's learning and well-being. This is because monitoring is accurate in identifying the setting's strengths and weaknesses and this results in effective action. There have been noticeable improvements in aspects of teaching such as the way in which staff extend children's language skills. Features such as these are now strengths in the provision. However, the improvement plan does not include measures to assess how effective the initiatives have been in achieving improved outcomes for children. This limits leaders at all levels appreciating precisely the success of their actions.

The school has a good capacity to improve given its track record of improving teaching and learning and aspects of the curriculum and strengthening the support for vulnerable families. Staff and governors are ambitious for the children and families. The leadership of the headteacher is well directed and underpinned by a thorough understanding of early years care and education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make better use of assessment to organise teaching in ways which best serve the next steps in learning.
- Implement measures to evaluate precisely the impact initiatives have on children's learning.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children enter school with standards which are well below expectations. About half speak little or no English. Some initially find difficulty resolving conflict. By the end of nursery, standards are below expectations in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. They are broadly as expected in personal, social, emotional and physical development.

Achievement is satisfactory but uneven. Children make good progress when they are taught in a small group. Assessment is used well in these situations, ensuring good progress, for example, by children who find it difficult to resolve conflict or to sustain concentration. At other times, children make satisfactory progress. The school's analysis shows differences in progress are not related to specific groups of children defined by race, gender or ability. They are related to how well assessment is used to organise teaching situations to best meet children's needs. Warm relationships, the increasing opportunities for children to choose what they do and the support given to family learning are having positive effects for all children. Most children develop their motivation, self-confidence and social skills well. The school's investment in ICT, both in resources and developing staff's skills, is resulting in good progress and expected standards. The good provision for physical development means children are confident and capable. Progress is slow in aspects of early numeracy and in the way children learn to control their actions. Professional development is increasing the skills of staff in supporting children in these areas in order to raise standards and improve progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development and well-being are good with significant strengths. Children really enjoy coming to nursery and parents are very appreciative of this. Children have a healthy appetite and eat their vegetables with relish. They are vigorous and adventurous. They tackle the climbing wall eagerly without being fearful of risk or unduly reckless. Children feel safe because of the trusting relationships they have with adults. Behaviour is good, although a small number of children need individual and skilful support in resolving conflicts and dealing with their emotions. The contribution children make to the nursery is satisfactory. Some are still learning to participate in organisational tasks such as 'tidy up time'. Their preparation for the future is satisfactory. While their literacy and numeracy standards are below expectations, children are sociable, confident with ICT and able to show initiative. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is affected by extended holidays and the usual illnesses associated with early childhood. However, the school has good systems to promote good levels of attendance and to follow up any unexplained absences.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and the picture is improving. Regular reviews of the quality of teaching lead to identifying priorities for improvement. Staff are working hard to

achieve these. Most notable are their successes in helping the majority of children to behave well and to show initiative. Staff consistently model courtesy and are highly respectful of children. When children choose their activities all staff are active in collaborating with them, developing their language, supporting them in negotiations with one another over resources and giving them confidence to tackle new challenges. The bilingual support given to children learning English and Somali is good. Staff use good signals to help routines run smoothly such as singing a 'tidy up' song. Small group sessions are well targeted to the different needs of children, for instance to develop their language, social skills or concentration. However, some situations do not help children to make good progress, for example whole-class sessions for singing and sharing ideas. On these occasions, the diverse needs of very young children cannot be satisfactorily met.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Some aspects of the curriculum are strong and innovative but other aspects are not sufficiently focused on the learning which is most appropriate for each child. This is particularly evident in large group work. An exciting project with an acting company is supporting staff in building on children's interests and the curriculum is enriched well through visits in the locality and by visitors to the setting. Monitoring identifies well where provision can be improved. For example, the access to child initiated and outside activities has been adjusted with good effect on children's personal development. In order to strengthen the support given to children's emotional development, the school is putting in place new initiatives based on a national scheme. There are also plans in place to raise the profile of calculating in the curriculum following training from a national expert in the field.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Concern for children's welfare is impressive. All the necessary procedures are in place to keep children safe and in the care of appropriate adults. The school makes every effort to provide for the wider needs of children and families. Children's well-being is promoted very well by the work done with parents to improve their communication and parenting skills. The links with other agencies, including health and social services, are very effective in keeping all concerned up to date with the needs of children and families.

Academic guidance is satisfactory. Much has been done to improve the assessment procedures recently. There is appropriate focus on children's involvement in their learning and also on what they know, understand and can do. At present these observations on children's learning do not take enough account of the very early stages of development for children with low starting points. The use of assessment is a mixed picture. The education plans for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are closely based on their needs and activities are well targeted to meet these. Small group activities are well informed by the knowledge gained from observing children. However, these assessments are not consistently used to guide the next steps in learning in every situation. For example, large group activities do not adequately match the learning and development needs of individual children. As a result, the participation of children with limited language skills is limited and the learning of more capable children is not extended.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The recently appointed headteacher is putting in place all the essential building blocks to raise the quality of provision. The deployment of resources is effective and carefully evaluated. This has prompted the governing body to increase the budget allocated to bilingual support because the leadership has identified that this helps children make better progress. A substantial surplus, built up over several years, is now being spent to good effect. Exciting plans are in place to completely redesign the accommodation to ensure better support for learning, integration and extension of nursery and day care services. Individual governors have a deep understanding of the diversity of, and the difficulties faced by, the local community. This enables the governing body to provide the school with appropriate support and challenge for its work. The positive influence of leaders at different levels in the school, using knowledge from their continued professional development, is much improved on the last inspection.

There is a strongly shared vision of securing integrated and highly effective provision. There is an increasing focus on learning in planning. Displayed around the nursery are 'learning stories' which identify what children are gaining from their experiences, for example 'persistence', 'taking responsibility' and 'developing interest'. The recent links with other settings in developing accurate assessment are beneficial. The improvement plan sets out appropriate priorities for developing the setting informed by accurate monitoring. Staff are active in addressing any weaknesses identified in practice so the quality of the curriculum and teaching, and consequently learning, are all improving. As a result, the confidence and competence children now develop in communication, because of the constructive way adults play alongside them developing their language, are impressive. Currently, the plan does not include criteria which identify how to measure success and this hinders all levels of leadership from precisely assessing the effectiveness of new initiatives.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

5 July 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Rosemary Nursery School and Family Unit, Bristol, BS2 0DT

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I came to your school recently. I enjoyed meeting you and looking at what you were doing very much.

I think Rosemary Nursery School and Family Unit is giving you a satisfactory education. All the adults are working together well to make everything better and better. You are learning the things that you should. Your parents let me know that you are happy in school. It was easy to tell by the way you came in eager to plan your day. The way you are taught, the things you do and the care and guidance you receive are all fine. The way the school works with your families to make sure you are safe and happy is very impressive.

The school is run well and there are exciting plans to improve the building. I have asked governors to think about all the improvements they make and how these help you to learn and feel happy. The staff will also look at how they organise and plan activities so you each learn what is best for you. I hope you will help them by giving your opinions and continuing to enjoy all the things you do in the nursery.

Please thank your parents for kindly sending in the questionnaires. These helped me to understand how well your school is doing.

Yours faithfully

Brenda Spencer Lead inspector