



Bilston Nursery School Early Excellence Centre

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 132018
Local Authority Wolverhampton
Inspection number 293916
Inspection date 27 February 2007
Reporting inspector Joyce Cox

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Wolverhampton Street
School category	Maintained		Bilston
Age range of pupils	0-4		WV14 0LT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01902 556416
Number on roll (school)	46	Fax number	01902 556930
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Gill Fellows
		Headteacher	Jo Barr
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2001		

Age group 0-4	Inspection date 27 February 2007	Inspection number 293916
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Bilston Nursery was designated an Excellence Centre in 2002 and a Children's Centre in 2006. The Centre provides an extensive range of integrated services and day-care facilities for families and children as well as Nursery provision for children aged three and four. It serves an area in which many families face challenging social and economic circumstances. Children's attainment when they start in the Nursery is well below average and particularly low in their communication skills. An above-average number of children have learning difficulties or disabilities and just under half have delayed speech and language development. Almost half of the children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a very small number are at an early stage of learning English.

The Centre is extremely popular and is over subscribed. It has won many awards for its work, including Investors in People, Basic Skills Quality Mark, National Early Years Manager of the Year and a National Professional Qualification in Combined Centre Leadership.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Bilston Nursery Early Excellence Centre provides an outstanding start to children's education. At the heart of the Centre's work is the belief that every child is special, and all staff successfully live out their aim to put 'children first and foremost.' One parent, summing up the views of many, wrote, 'This is a very good Nursery and I am proud that my children are part of it.' The staff are very skilled, approachable and caring and this ensures that children make exceptional progress in their personal, social and emotional development and are well equipped for their future lives. Parents, themselves, have an increased understanding of their child's play and development because of a highly successful parent partnership programme. The excellent use made of the Centre's extended services contributes significantly to the excellent care, guidance and support and enhances children's well-being.

It is obvious from the moment that children, carers and parents enter the Nursery, where they are warmly met and welcomed every day by the staff, that this is a happy, safe and lively place where learning is fun. Children flourish as the staff skilfully assess their different personalities and abilities. Staff sensitively encourage children to become confident and happy learners, prepared to try out new experiences and activities. As a result, achievement is outstanding and progress in all the areas of learning is exceptional. By the time they leave, most children reach the levels set for their age. A rich and varied curriculum, combined with high quality teaching, provides constant pleasure, excitement and adventure. Practitioners are extremely knowledgeable. They have excellent relationships with the children and inspire confidence and success. Consequently, the children's behaviour and attitudes are exemplary and contribute much to their outstanding achievement.

Leadership and management are outstanding. Led by an inspirational, extremely capable and experienced headteacher, all staff are constantly looking for ways to improve their work. They share a passionate commitment to providing high quality education. This is reflected in the drive to raise standards further and the skilful ways in which the Centre has developed its excellent provision over the years. Excellent progress has been made since the last inspection, particularly in improving children's speaking skills, in establishing very clear management systems and in offering extended care and tracking children's progress. There is clear evidence of the outstanding capacity for future improvement, and to build on the school's strengths. Governors provide excellent support to the school and are increasingly involved in evaluating its work. The one area to address in this otherwise extremely successful Centre is to extend the excellent tracking systems so that children's progress is recorded from birth to age four in preparation for the forthcoming Early Years guidance.

What the school should do to improve further

- Devise a way to easily track children's progress from birth to age four in light of the new Early Years curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

From a much lower-than-average starting point, children from all backgrounds and abilities make excellent progress and achieve exceptionally well in all areas of learning. This ensures that most children reach the expected levels for their ages by the time they leave and so are very well prepared for their Reception classes. Children make particularly rapid progress in their personal, social and emotional development because teaching successfully promotes children's ability to take responsibility for solving problems themselves and to negotiate with each other. Children love using the excellent outdoor facilities and learn that having fun in the fresh air and being active are good for their health. Hence all children also achieve particularly well in their physical development.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's confidence and self-esteem improve rapidly because all staff value them as individuals and listen to their ideas. They develop extremely positive attitudes to learning because it is made so enjoyable. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Children are friendly towards each other and mix well together, regardless of ethnicity, age or gender. They organise their own activities, for example, building a castle and planting beans to act the 'Jack and the Beanstalk' story. Children quickly become confident enough to work independently and rapidly learn to take turns and share resources. They remain busy throughout sessions, persevering with tasks and responding positively to encouragement and praise, which spurs them on to try even harder. Excellent relationships, friendships and behaviour ensure the Nursery is a great place to be. Because all the adults successfully make the most of every learning opportunity, children very quickly learn to celebrate different cultures in the community around them, for example, enjoying Divali celebrations.. Children enjoy eating healthy fruit snacks at break times. They learn how to keep themselves safe by sticking to the rules such as sharing toys and respecting other children's space when playing outdoors. The skills children learn, together with the independence they develop, are preparing them extremely well for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

After a careful analysis of each child's interests and learning needs, staff meticulously plan stimulating activities, with clear routines and plenty of sensitive encouragement for everyone to join in. Children's excellent response to adults' high expectations of behaviour adds to the very pleasant atmosphere. As a result of impressive research and detailed analysis of their practice, all staff have an excellent understanding of

how young children learn. This knowledge and understanding is applied skilfully to meeting the needs of each child. This level of individual attention works exceptionally well for children with learning difficulties. Equally effective is the careful and well-targeted support given to those children learning English as an additional language. Both groups are set precise, achievable goals. Skilful art teaching by an artist in residence brings less confident children out of their shells and stimulates much talk, humour and collaboration. A particular strength is the way that planning allows for a perfect balance between adult-guided and child-selected activities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is varied and rich and is based on an excellent understanding of the learning needs of young children. Staff achieve an impressive balance between following and extending the children's interests and ensuring all areas of learning are covered. Excellent use is made of the indoor and outdoor environments and exciting and enticing resources are provided. Staff are particularly skilled at using information and communication technology (ICT) to record children's progress and development. Children and staff receive excellent training in using the Smartboard and programmable toys from an ICT specialist. Visits to the seaside and Dudley Zoo, together with visitors and special events, add richness to the curriculum and broaden children's horizons. Excellent links with external agencies such as speech and language services also enhance children's learning. The curriculum includes plenty of opportunities for children to learn about how to keep safe and healthy, such as the safe handling of foods and tools.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents are delighted with the outstanding care, guidance and support provided. They thoroughly appreciate the close working partnership with the Centre which increasingly helps them to understand and support their children's learning.

Staff make excellent use of the comprehensive assessment system to guide children on to the next steps in their learning. The headteacher is currently devising ways to track children's progress from birth to age four in preparation for the new Early Years curriculum. Staff are extremely knowledgeable about all aspects of child protection. Risk assessments are thorough and health and safety matters receive immediate attention. All staff and visitors are checked for their suitability to work with children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The outstanding leadership and management is a key factor in the Centre's success. The headteacher has provided excellence guidance and vision for some time. She is ably supported by a highly effective and confident leadership team, who have also

played a pivotal role in maintaining and improving upon the Centre's provision since the last inspection. Everyone who works in the Centre is encouraged to see themselves as lifelong learners. The headteacher knows the Centre very well and this is reflected in the school's accurate, albeit rather modest self-evaluation. The governing body are strong supporters of the Centre and feel confident to question and challenge the leadership. There is no sense of complacency and senior leaders expect and achieve the best from themselves and everyone.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

I enjoyed my visit to your Nursery very much. I really enjoyed watching some of the exciting things you do. I know your mums and dads think that your Nursery is a very special place and I agree with them.

There are lots of wonderful things about your Nursery.

- The staff care about you very much and make learning really interesting and fun.
- The headteacher is very clever at running the Centre and makes sure you all have a good time and do well.
- Everyone in the Nursery is happy and friendly and they all work together to make it an exciting place for you.
- Anybody who needs extra help is always given it.
- You love learning new things and are very good at sharing, taking turns, talking and being kind to each other.
- You love the fruit and the other healthy snacks you get every day.

I have asked the headteacher to find a good way to write down all the great things you learn from when you start to when you finish at the Centre.

It was great to see that you are so happy at Nursery and doing so well.