

Rubery Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103131
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	323762
Inspection date	15 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Christine Millett

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clare Cartmell
Headteacher	Jean Shiner
Date of previous school inspection	24 May 2006
School address	Leybrook Road Rednal Birmingham B45 9PB
Telephone number	0121 4642158
Fax number	0121 4643327

Age group	3–4
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Rubery Nursery shares a site with secondary and primary schools in a residential area on the outskirts of Birmingham. Within the school premises, there is a before- and after-school club, which is managed by the governing body of the school. The majority of pupils are of White British descent and approximately 10% speak English as an additional language. A similar percentage have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Since the previous inspection the school has been designated a Children's Centre with Rubery Nursery School being part of the Centre. The school has been awarded the Early Years Setting Health Award and the Impetus Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Rubery Nursery is a good school. The dedicated headteacher, ably supported by hardworking staff, has led the school extremely well through a time of change. This high level of care has resulted in a school where everyone is valued and staff and children thrive in the positive learning atmosphere. Parents understandably hold the school and staff in high esteem. They are unanimous in their praise. In the words of one parent, 'The nursery is a fantastic place for my son to learn and experience things.'

Teaching is good throughout the setting. Consequently, children achieve well, despite their low starting points. They make good progress in all areas of learning and the majority move to the infant school with skills and knowledge broadly in line with those expected for their age, although their understanding of letters and sounds is not as secure as other aspects of learning. Staff know the children well and consequently learning is effectively tailored to their needs. However, teachers do not always closely monitor how children use the different activity areas set up for them, so opportunities are sometimes missed to deepen their knowledge and understanding further. Children who require additional learning support are quickly identified and make good progress because of the patience, sensitivity and skills shown by staff. Another contributory factor to this progress is the excellent links with a wide range of external agencies, such as social services and speech and language services. More able children also generally make good progress, but are not always fully challenged by the planned activities to really extend their knowledge and understanding. There is a strong sense of enthusiasm as children come through the door, as well as great anticipation of what they will do each day. Appealing activities motivate children and the outdoor area is a particularly valuable feature, with exciting dens to hide in and areas to explore. Children learn and develop well through stimulating play, talk and valuable first-hand experiences. Adults nurture and support children's learning with many opportunities for them to initiate their own learning. This ensures that children develop into increasingly independent learners who can make decisions and organise themselves well. Their personal development comes on in leaps and bounds and their behaviour is good. Children enjoy healthy snacks and take pleasure in helping to prepare their own choice from the fresh fruit available. Constant access to the outdoors and the 'forest school' ensure children get plenty of fresh air and exercise. All children get on very well together, so that the nursery functions as a harmonious community that promotes equality of opportunity. Staff are committed to providing good quality care for children at all times. Arrangements for safeguarding meet current government requirements. These are regularly reviewed and risk assessments are carefully organised and well managed.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The school has improved since the last inspection because the determined headteacher provides clear direction and strong support for staff, and robust systems for self-evaluation mean that it is well placed to continue to improve. Senior leaders have a clear knowledge and understanding of their roles and share the headteacher's drive to improve achievement and raise standards. Highly effective systems for assessment and tracking are in place, but the school recognises that staff are not all sufficiently involved in using them. The school has accurately evaluated its successes and areas for development. This has identified community cohesion as an area to expand. Clear, positive feedback constantly develops the quality of teaching. A well-considered development plan prioritises improvements and a detailed check is kept on children's progress. Governors are

loyal supporters who work hard for their school and fully realise the responsibility they have to take part in and monitor its work.

What the school should do to improve further

- Monitor provision more closely to ensure all activity areas are regularly used by all children and that they provide sufficient challenge, particularly for the more able children.
- Bring about further progress by involving all staff in assessment, data analysis and the setting of children's targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children join the school with a wide range of skills and knowledge but overall they are below what is typical for their age, particularly in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy and knowledge and understanding of the world. Their good progress is a result of the staff's sound knowledge of how young children learn, and the dedicated way in which their interests are further stimulated by the adults around them. Most are working at the level expected for their age by the time they leave. The stimulating experiences planned for social, creative and physical development lead to consistently good progress being made. Children who are not finding learning easy and may have additional needs or may be learning English as an additional language are quickly identified and support is put in place so that they also make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good because they are taught to be members of one community. As a result, children cooperate well together. They care for each other and enjoy sharing experiences such as the thrill of getting a sound out of a trumpet. Children are taught how to keep safe with an emphasis on assessing what is risky and making appropriate choices. They are encouraged to adopt a very healthy lifestyle through the opportunities the outside provision offers and dance sessions. At lunchtime, they are offered healthy meal options in a nurturing environment. Children enjoy their experience at school because learning is interesting and exciting. Consequently, behaviour is good and they achieve well. They make decisions on a regular basis, choosing what they will do, sharing equipment and toys, and planning and acting out situations together. These are key factors for their future success and well-being. They know that if they are concerned or troubled they can go to an adult who will sort it out. They are developing the good habits of inquisitive learners and work well collaboratively or on their own. Although bouts of sickness have affected levels of attendance, it is satisfactory on a day-to-day basis.

Quality of provision

Effectiveness in promoting children's learning and development

Grade: 2

Interesting and varied activities are used well by teachers to engage children. Adults working with them have a good knowledge of Early Years Foundation Stage learning and development requirements and ensure activities develop all areas of learning. Good questioning prompts children to think more deeply. The outdoor provision includes all the areas of learning and has been creatively developed with the needs and enjoyment of the children in mind. The curriculum

has a good impact on children's learning and development and is enriched and extended very well. During the inspection, for example, a group of children were captivated by the noises made by various musical instruments and were keen to have a go themselves. Plans for teaching are flexible depending on children's interests. This ensures a varied and practical day but the lack of structure in monitoring how children use the activity areas restricts the progress of some children, particularly the more able. The regular opportunities children have to go on visits into the local community, as well as an extended residential trip, are very beneficial. Children have a good range of opportunities to use technology themselves, including computers, programmable toys and digital cameras, and have recently helped scan their pictures on to the school's website. Children enjoy discussing their work with their key worker, or with their parents, and are helped to reflect on what they have learned. Good communication with parents and carers means that they are helped to be an effective part of the learning process.

Effectiveness in promoting children's welfare

Grade: 2

Parents are complimentary about this aspect of provision. One parent commented that all staff 'are friendly and helpful and I feel happy to leave my child here every day'. Children are well cared for and thrive in the safe, secure environment because they are comfortable and ready to learn. Each child has a keyworker with whom they have a close, supportive relationship. This helps to ensure that staff have a clear and detailed overview of each child's progress and welfare, which they share with parents and each other at daily staff meetings. The nursery's outstanding partnership with parents reassures the children and so they quickly develop trusting relationships with staff and with each other. Parents have regular updates about their children's learning and can attend helpful workshops to understand more about how children learn in school. Children are taught to keep safe, both through the planned curriculum and as opportunities arise. The school emphasises the importance of working together and behaving well. The children are praised for their achievements, whether they are academic or social. As a result, children are developing good habits which help them to become good learners. Child protection and safeguarding procedures meet current government requirements. Arrangements to ensure children's physical safety and well-being are established. Staff make good use of the information from learning observations to identify quickly any child in need of additional support. Excellent links with health visitors and learning support services successfully promote children's health, learning and well-being. Sensitive planning ensures a smooth transition from home to nursery, and later from nursery to reception.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has maintained a clear direction for the school through a period of staff changes and the extension of the existing building to house children's centre services. This has meant that the school continues to be an exciting and fun place that children enjoy coming to and is highly regarded by parents. The headteacher knows the children, the staff and the school very well and is leading the way towards ensuring that the outcomes for children are even better. She is aware of areas that need to be developed, and is beginning to help other staff to take the lead in this, providing appropriate support where it is needed. Assessment and tracking are thorough and generally used well, although not enough staff are involved in using this information to set targets. The school's focus is clearly on the enjoyment of the children

and developing good attitudes towards learning. This has built up a strong sense of common purpose. Resources are used well and the school makes the most of the buildings and grounds.

The school contributes greatly to the development of community cohesion through helping the children to get on well together and care for the nursery. This development is extended through the children's centre and its toddler group, parenting courses and support for childminders. The school also has extremely strong links with the secondary and primary schools with which it shares the site, but is just beginning the process of making contact with other nurseries in this country and beyond. Governors provide strong support alongside suitable challenge. There is a well-considered approach to ensuring continuity among governors and developing their own skills further. Financial challenges have been well managed and the school provides good value for money.

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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 is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
The standards[1] reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

16 June 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Rubery Nursery School, Rednal, B45 9PB

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited your school. We enjoyed spending time with you and talking to you. You have really helped us. We think your school is a good school and these are the main things that we thought you might like to know about.

- You learn quickly because the adults give you many exciting things to do and teach you well.
- Adults really care for you and help you if you are worried or upset.
- They also check how well you are learning and are good at giving you extra help when you need it.
- They work well with your mums and dads and this helps you to learn.
- You enjoy school and behave well.
- You are kind and helpful to each other and share your toys and bikes.
- You are good at helping around the nursery.
- You know how to stay safe and keep really healthy.

The school is working hard to make things even better for you. We have asked the school to do two things.

- Make sure you are all working and playing in all the areas that have been set up for you, and that there are some more difficult things for you to try.
- Ensure that all your teachers know how well you are doing and can set targets for you, to help you do even better.

We hope that you will all continue to enjoy coming to school and try your hardest so that you are even more successful in the future.

Yours faithfully

Christine Millett

Lead inspector