

Filton Avenue Nursery School and Children's Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108894
Local Authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	337172
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Wiola Hola HMI

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	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	141
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dilly Baldwin
Headteacher	Rachel Edwards
Date of previous school inspection	8 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors visited eight lessons or part-lessons, and held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, two members of the governing body including the chair, groups of staff, and met with some parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at some of the school's documentation including: records of children's attainment and progress; some policies; the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans; and minutes of meetings of the governing body. Inspectors received and analysed 50 questionnaires from parents and carers.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of provision for children aged three and over in the maintained Nursery classes. The work of the children's centre was inspected in November 2009 under pilot arrangements. Another inspection in March 2009 looked at early years provision for young children aged nought to three and wrap-around care for children aged nought to four. The school also had a survey visit in October 2008 when the inspector looked at the overall effectiveness of continuing professional development. Inspectors took account of the contents of all these recent inspections while undertaking this one.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- children's achievement and enjoyment and the development of their lifelong learning skills
- the extent to which all staff have a role in monitoring and evaluating the school's work
- the use by staff of assessment information to plan for children's learning
- the arrangements for safeguarding children.

Information about the school

The school serves a diverse community facing increasingly difficult economic and social challenges. Some families choose to travel to the Nursery from across the city of Bristol. About a quarter of children are White British and the rest are from a wide range of other backgrounds. A quarter of children speak English as an additional language. About a third of the children in the maintained Nursery classes have special educational needs. There is little mobility and most children stay in their Nursery class for the full one year. The school was designated as a children's centre in 2007 achieving full core offer status in March 2009. It achieved Healthy School status in 2007.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This Nursery school is outstanding. Educational provision is of exceptionally high quality because staff work with complete clarity of purpose, excellent teamwork and with a deep understanding of children's individual needs. Parents are full of praise for the way in which their children are encouraged to learn, and also for how the school helps them to support their child's development. The school is also a children's centre and, as such, supports families as a whole in helping these young children to learn and enjoy school enormously.

Children join the Nursery with wide-ranging starting points in terms of their overall development. Some have also attended the school's provision for children under three that was also judged as outstanding in an inspection earlier this year. Many have significant barriers to learning and start with attainment that is below that typical of most three-year-old children. Staff help children and their parents settle quickly into new routines and relationships. The partnership with parents and other agencies is extremely strong and this underpins and supports the school's exceptionally good levels of care, guidance and support. Children feel, and are, entirely secure. Their understanding of how to lead healthy lives is developed extremely well.

Children make excellent progress. Most are well placed after one year in the Nursery to reach the learning goals expected by the end of the Reception Year in their next schools. Such good achievement results from an extremely well-designed curriculum and excellent planning by teams of teachers who, as a whole, provide children with a very high quality learning experience. Classrooms are rich, indoors and outside, with imaginative activities and vibrant displays to capture and respond to children's interests. Parents say, and inspectors agree totally, that the staff 'take the lead from the child' and his or her needs. Staff can do this because of the outstanding assessment arrangements through which each child's starting points, learning and progress are noted, recorded and used extremely well to plan next steps in development.

The headteacher leads the school exceptionally well and is supported by an outstanding governing body. She, her deputy and governors have steered very adeptly, steadily and successfully the developments in recent years to strengthen the effectiveness of the Nursery school and to embrace work as a children's centre. Each member of staff makes a valuable and valued contribution to the school's outstanding leadership and management. Management systems are exemplary in many ways, as seen for example in the thorough and accurate processes for school self-evaluation, and in the ensuing, exciting and entirely appropriate plans for further development. Data on children's attainment, progress and attendance are compiled and used very thoroughly but the way they are stored does not always allow for easy and speedy analysis. This school is

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also outstanding in its work on promoting equality of opportunity, community cohesion and in tackling discrimination. It has excellent capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Maintain high quality provision and outcomes, and raise further children's attainment, by continued use of the already excellent professional development arrangements for staff and further support for parents.
- Enhance systems for soring data on children's attainment, progress and attendance so as to make for easier analysis, particularly when looking at outcomes for any sub-groups of children, and particularly for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

1

The Nursery gives children so many opportunities to explore and learn, and their tremendous enjoyment and engagement is very apparent. Children have learned the importance of working and playing safely, and show considerable independence in making choices about which activity to do, in washing hands before eating, and in putting equipment away when required, for example. In group work, children concentrate and behave well primarily because the group tasks are very attractive and also because staff guide and correct them very gently yet effectively should any untoward behaviour ever occur. The great care taken by staff to help children and their families adapt to new daily routines pays off so that children feel entirely secure in the setting and display very trusting and positive relationships with the adults in the Nursery.

Children are subtly encouraged to test themselves in new situations and experience unfamiliar activities through which enquiring minds and confidence develop so very well. It is clear that on joining the Nursery many children's skills, and particularly in speaking, are not as well developed as might typically be expected of three-year-olds. Children's verbal interactions are mostly with staff and less so with each other. Excellent teaching ensures that skills in speaking, and indeed in all other areas of learning for young children, improve extremely well. Children's readiness to take part in creative artwork, in exploring the material world, in taking part in festivals from around the world, and in thinking about their own feelings and those of others, using puppets for example, demonstrates the excellent way that the Nursery fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children are extremely well prepared for their next steps in education because of the confidence they gain here and because of the very positive attitudes to learning that they develop. It is clear from the vast range of experiences and activities undertaken that children make a considerable contribution to the school and wider community. Thorough 'learning diaries' are kept for each child and these are a delight to look at with photographs and quotes to show impressive development across all the areas of learning.

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These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Children's attainment ¹	3
The quality of children's learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
Children's behaviour	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Children's attendance ¹	2
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Tremendous care and attention to detail are paid to planning activities for the children to make them exciting, topical and relevant, and to meet their specific needs and interests. Classrooms are delightful, as are the corridor learning spaces and the outside area ' all so full of lovely displays and inviting things to explore and marvel at. The music garden, the slopes to scramble up, the wooden fort with bridges, the home corners, indoor wooden mirrored tent, book corners, light tables, huge building blocks and seasonal displays are examples of the great sources of delight. Sessions are skilfully arranged to balance times of group work, free-flow and free-choice activities, times of very busy work and times of rest, quiet and calm that include storytelling and some singing. Movement from one activity to another is seamless and children understand the clear expectations of their work and behaviour. Behaviour management is totally unobtrusive and yet entirely effective. Lunch and snack times are expertly managed to be orderly and sociable occasions. Group and circle times contribute greatly to children's

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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emotional development. Staff are generally very skilful in drawing out children's thoughts and ideas and this underpins their excellent progress. Interactions are extremely well judged so that children can at times explore for themselves and at other times be guided with timely prompts by adults.

Exceptionally high levels of care, guidance and support are provided for the children in every respect to ensure their well-being. Parents are justifiably confident that their children are extremely well looked after. The school's support for children whose circumstances have made them vulnerable is of the highest standard. Partnerships with parents and external agencies are strong so that specialist help is sought and provided as needed. Children settle so well because preparations to welcome them are so thoughtfully undertaken, in home visits and in other ways. Teachers and helpers are highly perceptive and note frequently, by taking photographs and jotting down what children say, significant moments of each child's progress. These records are used astutely to ensure that each child's learning is moved speedily forward, with no stress and only joy. Smiles and gentleness abound in this place but great rigour too.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

'Everyone is a leader' is what staff say, as they express much pride in being members of this school. They recognise that the headteacher has high expectations of their work and contributions, and rise to them. They relish the fact that much has been entrusted to them in terms of generating ideas and taking a lead on seeing through initiatives. Each one plays a part in reviewing the school's effectiveness and driving improvements. Impressive are the team meetings at which staff routinely review their work, consider each child's progress and well-being, and plan the next programme of activities for the children. Teamwork is of an exceptionally high standard. Leadership and management have so many outstanding features, for example: in the excellent way that teaching and learning are led; in provision for staff development; in performance management systems; in the smooth day-to-day organisation; in outstanding communication; and in highly effective school self-evaluation. All staff have been involved in creating the quality criteria by which the school judges the effectiveness of its own work and this results in a very secure understanding of what each member of staff is aiming to achieve for the children.

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The school rightly says of itself, 'We are a true community school, recruiting and training local people, including parents, as part of our work to promote community cohesion and raise aspirations.' The school motto of 'Learning together with parents and children for a brighter today' is lived out to the full. The school's close contact with parents and carers is highly valued by them. Child protection procedures are entirely robust and all required health and safety checks are carried out extremely well. The school works exceptionally well with parents and outside agencies to support children when this is required. The classrooms, equipment and resources are of excellent quality, used imaginatively, and maintained to a very high standard of order and cleanliness. Governance is excellent. Governors are knowledgeable, supportive and have worked extremely well to steer, with senior staff, the school's move to become a successful children's centre with all the complexities that this has entailed. The school's vision for the future, based on an exceptionally good understanding of the needs of the community it serves, is clear, commonly held and being worked on with much enthusiasm and skill.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about this nursery school and value greatly what it provides for them and their children. They say that their children are happy and eager to come to school and go home talking about what they have done. They praise the exciting range of activities that staff devise. Inspectors agree totally

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with the views of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Filton Avenue Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 141 children registered at the school in the maintained nursery.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	82	9	18	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	44	88	6	12	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	56	21	42	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	68	14	28	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	35	70	14	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	64	16	32	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	62	19	38	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	26	52	15	30	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	68	13	26	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	56	19	38	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	56	20	40	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	37	74	13	26	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	86	6	12	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its children. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well children acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



10 December 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Filton Avenue Nursery School, Bristol BS7 0DL

I visited your school recently with another inspector and saw you making gingerbread, playing with ice, sorting out decorations, playing outside in the adventure playground or in the music garden, reading books in the tent, and doing many other exciting things. Many of your parents wrote to say how pleased they are with this Nursery; some said 'it is fantastic'. We agree. This Nursery is outstanding.

The teachers and helpers work together extremely well to plan activities that are just right for you so that you are happy and enjoy exploring things. They take excellent care of you. You learn really well how to stay safe and healthy. You are very good at washing your hands before you eat. You make outstanding progress. You grow in confidence as well as learning so many new things about the world and each other. Some of you already speak well when you start at the Nursery but many do not. Staff help you to develop your language and other skills so that, by the end of the Nursery Year most of you can do the things that are typically expected for your age. You are extremely well prepared for the Reception class in your next school because of your sound skills, good behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning.

Your headteacher leads the school exceptionally well. She, and the governors, and all the staff, are constantly checking that everything is right for you. They are always looking out for what else can be improved. Staff have some more exciting ideas for the future. Over the last year or two, the Nursery has also become a successful children's centre and is now able to run so many more activities for you and your parents and carers.

We recognise that the school will have to work hard to keep up such high standards. Staff and governors know what they want to improve. We have suggested that some records about what you can do and how often you attend are stored in a slightly different way so that they can be used more easily to plan new activities for you.

We hope that you continue to enjoy school and miss as few days as possible.

I wish you all the very best.

Yours sincerely

Wiola Hola

Her Majesty's Inspector

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