

# Bilston Nursery School Children's Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	132018
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wolverhampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	341271
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Best

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	58
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gary Gentle (Acting Chair)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 February 2007
<b>School address</b>	Wolverhampton Street Bilston West Midlands
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 10 sessions and 14 members of staff. Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body, a member of the local authority, staff and children. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of policies and documents, including the school's safeguarding arrangements, reports to the governing body, teachers' planning, assessment records and evidence of children's learning. Inspectors also analysed questionnaires returned by staff and 23 parents and carers.

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

- whether all groups of children make consistently good progress across the areas of learning
- how effectively staff use information about what children know and can do in order to plan their next steps in learning
- how effectively the governing body evaluates and influences the school's work
- how well the school promotes community cohesion.

## Information about the school

Bilston Nursery School Children's Centre provides a range of integrated services for children, parents and carers. Children attend the Nursery either on a part-time or full-time basis following their third birthday. Most have attended the Children's Centre provision from an early age and many participate in the extended services provided before and after the Nursery day. The child care and other services provided by the Children's Centre are inspected and reported upon separately by Ofsted.

There are broadly equal proportions of White British and Asian children in the Nursery, with others from Caribbean and other backgrounds. Just under a quarter of the children speak English as an additional language, although none are at the early stages of English language acquisition. The proportion of children formally identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is small but the school is in the process of assessing the needs of other children. A small number of children are 'looked after' by the local authority.

There have been many changes in staffing since the last inspection, and the current headteacher took over in January 2008 following a period when the school was run by an acting headteacher. The deputy headteacher took up her newly created post in September 2008.

**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

The school makes outstanding provision for the children in its care and they make excellent progress in all areas of their development. Parents and carers are highly satisfied with the provision, one speaking for many in saying: 'The school provides an excellent environment that has nurtured my child's needs. The staff know my child very well and are able to meet her needs... she loves to attend and cannot wait until Monday morning.' Many children enter the Nursery with skills and experiences that are well below those expected for their age. They settle quickly into the very well organised daily routine and rapidly become immersed in the wide range of different, interesting and challenging activities that are constantly available. This is because of the outstanding quality of the school's provision for children's care, support and guidance and, in particular, the excellent preparations made by the school for induction. Children get to know their key worker well before they start in the Nursery so that the transition is smooth and backed up by excellent partnerships between staff and parents and carers.

By the time they leave to join Reception classes in their chosen primary school, children's skills and experiences are broadly similar to those expected for their age across the areas of learning. Children make outstanding progress, especially in their personal, social and emotional development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, which inspires their confidence as learners and provides an excellent platform for them to flourish in the other areas of learning. Children's behaviour is outstanding and they have a very clear understanding of right and wrong. They thoroughly appreciate the importance of eating healthily and taking exercise.

Children's high quality learning is the direct result of outstanding teaching. Relationships between adults and children are excellent, promoting a high degree of trust and security in these keen and enthusiastic young learners. Children are actively involved in planning what they are going to do, particularly in the splendid outside area which they access throughout the year, regardless of the weather. Staff make excellent use of questions and comments to guide children's learning and help them review the progress they have made. The school has rightly recognised that an even sharper focus on children's independent thinking and problem-solving skills and additional opportunities for reflection in their sessions will further enhance their progress by helping them to understand and determine for themselves their next steps in learning.

Children's achievements are carefully plotted against nationally agreed developmental statements, and those at risk of falling behind are swiftly identified and supported. This ensures that all groups of children make the best possible progress during their time in the Nursery. This is particularly evident in the strong progress made by boys and those children who speak English as an additional language. The local authority is shortly to

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introduce an electronic format for recording children's attainment and progress that will be common to all its Early Years Foundation Stage settings. The school rightly regards its implementation of this as a priority for its own development because it appreciates the benefits of the system's enhanced features, particularly in speeding up the analysis of information and identification of trends.

The school has made excellent progress since the last inspection, implementing and developing many new initiatives and managing a number of changes in staffing, roles and responsibilities. It has an outstanding capacity to sustain this progress as a result of the highly effective leadership team, and the commitment and hard work of the staff. The headteacher is a driving force in moving the school forward. The leadership team work very closely together and their monitoring of the school's work is highly accurate. Very analytical self-evaluation drives the school's plans for development and the governing body, with its highly organised committee structure, is actively involved in supporting and evaluating the work of the school. First-class links with other providers and outside experts directly benefit the children and their families, and help to smooth the way forward in the next stage of their education. The school provides outstanding value for money.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Enhance children's understanding of their next steps in learning by ensuring that:
  - staff systematically use feedback and questions to guide children's independent thinking and problem-solving
  - children have regular opportunities to reflect on what they are doing and what they need to do next.
- Work with the local authority to implement and embed new systems for recording and tracking children's achievement as soon as possible.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of children**

**1**

Children's achievement is good. They make substantial gains in their development because they thrive on the rich range of opportunities provided. Children's enjoyment, evidenced in their words and actions and strongly endorsed by their parents and carers, is outstanding. Observations of sessions and scrutiny of the school's tracking information show just how far many children's skills and experiences have improved in a relatively short period of time. Focused intervention for children at risk of falling behind has paid dividends, as has the way in which children for whom English is an additional language have benefited from a very language-rich environment. A strength of the school's planning is that it provides staff with the flexibility to tailor all children's learning to their needs, and this particularly enables the more able children to be extended and fulfilled. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and this is reflected in the high proportion of children working at or above the age-expected levels in their personal, social and emotional development. The extensive and exceedingly

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well-planned grounds provide a wealth of opportunity for children to reflect and appreciate the wonders of life and the natural world. Children have an excellent understanding of keeping safe because they are actively taught about what is safe and dangerous, and how to minimise the risk. For example, in the forest area children roast marshmallows over an open fire under adult supervision: they know that the fire can burn and that they must use long sticks to hold the foil packages over the fire from the safety of their log seats. Children's keen sense of fairness and cooperation is evidenced in the quality of their work and play, and the school makes very good use of its own resources, the community and the locality to promote children's cultural development. Children are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education. The headteacher of the main receiving primary school says that highly accurate assessment information he receives enables children from the Nursery to make a flying start in his Reception class. Attendance is good, with nearly 25% of the children achieving full attendance during this year. There is a small group of children whose attendance is uneven but the school works closely with parents and carers and outside agencies to bring about improvement, often with rapid and sustained success.

*These are the grades for children's outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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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## How effective is the provision?

The school's curriculum provides children with rich and memorable experiences that very successfully promote their learning and personal development. A strength of the planning is that it does not overprescribe what children are to learn, thus enabling practitioners to adjust their help, support and direction to meet the needs and interests of individuals. Their success in doing this reflects the practitioners' excellent knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and develop.

Sessions are very well organised and resourced, making good and regular use of new technologies. They are conducted at a brisk pace that engages children's attention and sustains their concentration; nonetheless, staff ensure that children have enough time to pursue their interests and complete what they have planned. Adults make skilled use of questions to check children's understanding and guide their next steps in learning; through their monitoring of teaching and learning, leaders have correctly identified that this can be developed further to more sharply focus children's thinking and encourage them to identify their next steps in learning with greater independence. There is an excellent balance between adult-led and child-chosen activities, with adults always willing to step in as patients in the hospital role play or, decked in similar waterproof clothing to the children, take part in experiments to see how controlling the flow of water from a garden hose can extend the distance it can travel. Visits and visitors, particularly the emergency services, make a memorable contribution to developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

Underlying this excellent provision is the very thorough gathering of information about what children know and can do, much of which is gathered using digital photography by both children and adults. The school's assessment systems are straightforward but comprehensive, enabling all practitioners to quickly and accurately update their knowledge of each individual and respond promptly to extend their learning. The school has worked very hard to develop its assessment systems since the last inspection and is continually striving to refine them: the implementation of the local authority's new electronic system is a logical extension of the school's development of assessment. This is a prime example of the leaders' quest for continuous improvement and development. The school has well-established systems for ensuring the care, guidance and support of children and their families. The key worker arrangement enables staff to know the children in their care exceedingly well, and the school is able to point to how this knowledge and understanding has been highly successfully in helping to support children and their families in challenging circumstances. In their responses to the questionnaire, parents and carers stressed the high quality care their children received. One wrote: 'The staff are kind, approachable, encouraging and supportive of each child's individual needs.'

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

Staff morale is very high and all share a strong sense of purpose in meeting challenging but achievable targets. In response to the staff questionnaire one commented: 'Commitment, dedication and exemplary practice can be seen everywhere within the Centre. It is an oasis of learning and opportunity for families who grow from its existence.' The leadership team undertake regular and rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning, and this information is incorporated into forward planning. The analysis of children's progress ensures that all children have full equality of opportunity and leaders are quick to identify the need for additional support for children and families, where required.

The governing body is highly effective in holding the school to account. The legacy of the previous Chair of the Governing Body has been a very strong and effective committee structure that is being maintained and strengthened as the school continues to move forward. The headteacher's reports are detailed and include close analysis of trends to which the governing body give close consideration. As a result, spending decisions are well informed and the school's financial security in a period of changes in funding arrangements is backed by clear and reasoned planning. The evaluation of priorities in the school's development plan is robust. Safeguarding arrangements, which this inspection found to be good, have recently been thoroughly checked and ways of further improving systems identified. Staff are well trained and systems regularly reviewed and updated. Similarly, a recent and thorough review of the school's promotion of community cohesion has rightly identified that while the provision is good, it has not yet done all it can to develop the global dimension.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>



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<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are very pleased with the school's provision. Inspectors endorse their positive views. A very small number expressed concern that children spent too much time playing rather than learning but inspectors disagree, judging that staff expertly promote children's learning across the areas of learning through children's play.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Bilston Nursery School Children's Centre 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 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 23 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 58 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	91	2	9	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	91	2	9	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	65	6	26	2	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	74	5	22	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	70	6	26	0	0	1	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	57	9	39	0	0	1	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	70	7	30	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)	14	61	8	35	1	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	70	5	22	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	57	10	43	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	52	8	35	1	4	1	4
The school is led and managed effectively	19	83	3	13	1	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	78	4	17	1	4	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



19 July 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Bilston Nursery School Children's Centre,  
Wolverhampton, WV14 0LT

Thank you very much for making us so very welcome when we visited your school, and sharing your views with us. We think your Nursery is outstanding and here are some of the reasons.

You thoroughly enjoy coming to the Nursery and make outstanding progress.

Your behaviour is excellent and you care very well for each other.

You listen carefully to adults and plan what you are going to do very carefully.

You play well with each other and learn a great deal as you play.

All the adults in the Nursery care very well for you and help you all they can.

You make excellent use of the outside area and have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe.

The adults know exactly how well you are doing and how they can help you do better.

The Nursery is exceedingly well run and all the staff want the very best for you.

We have asked the adults to make your learning even better by helping you think about what you are doing and what you are going to do next, and encouraging you to think things out and solve problems yourselves. We have also asked them to work with the local authority to get a new electronic system for tracking how well you are getting on up and running. This will help the adults know even more quickly what you can do and where they can help you.

Many of you will be starting in your new schools in September. You have had a wonderful start in the Nursery and we wish you well for the future. For those of you who are staying a bit longer, you will be able to help all the adults put these new things in place.

Yours sincerely

Mike Best

Lead inspector

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