

Bloomsbury Nursery School

Bloomsbury Street, Nechells, Birmingham, B7 5BX

Inspection dates

5–6 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The school is extremely well led by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors. They have very high expectations for both staff and children which they communicate exceptionally well.
- All children are enthusiastic learners who show great confidence and pride in their achievements. This is because teachers and other adults value and respect every child's capabilities.
- Children behave exceptionally well. They are highly engaged in the interesting and motivating activities because teachers ensure that these are firmly rooted in the children's interests and appeal to their curiosity.
- The nursery is very carefully organized to create a calm, welcoming environment. The joy of learning is evident in the many examples of children's explorations and investigations on display.
- Children make excellent progress from sometimes very low starting points. This is particularly noticeable in their speech and language.
- The school enjoys overwhelming support from parents. This is because the staff work hard to support families, welcome their participation and are highly committed to the diverse population they serve.
- Teaching is outstanding. The staff form a very cohesive team, working together and supporting each other superbly well. This provides an excellent role model for the children.
- Leaders, managers and governors support and motivate teaching staff by providing them with inspirational professional development. The staff respond extremely well to these and have developed reflective and responsive ways of working.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector spent almost four hours observing the nursery sessions. This included some small group work which was jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, representatives of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority. Informal discussions took place with children while they worked.
- Samples of the school's work in the form of project documentation were scrutinised, along with some of the children's profile folders.
- The inspector took account of the school's survey of parental views and the 11 responses to the online survey (Parent View). She also met and talked with parents informally as they brought their children to school and at the well-attended, monthly, coffee morning.
- The inspector looked at key documents including performance data produced by the school, procedures and policies for safeguarding, the school's own self evaluation, governing body minutes and the school development plan.
- In addition 11 staff questionnaires were taken into account.

Inspection team

Christine Merrick, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bloomsbury is a larger-than-average sized nursery school. Most children attend on a full-time basis and the majority are eligible for free school meals. This is an above average proportion.
- Most children are from minority ethnic backgrounds
- The majority of children speak English as an additional language and there is a small minority who speak no English on entry to the nursery. Currently, children speak thirteen different first languages.
- The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs supported through Early Years action is above average, as is the proportion who are supported at Early Years action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- All the children are educated on one site which also includes a children's centre, Early Years provision for under threes and extended day-care, all of which are the responsibility of the governing body. The children's centre and Early Years provision are inspected separately and the reports of their inspections can be found on the Ofsted website.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the confidence of all staff to use the evidence they gather about children to identify and document their next steps in learning and changes to provision.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Most children start nursery with skills and knowledge below or well below the expectations for their age group. The proportions making or exceeding expected progress are high and by the end of nursery a large majority are at least in line with expectations in all areas of learning. Parents recognise the value of this. As one parent said, 'The nursery has given my daughter a wonderful basis to move to Reception with ease.'
- The very high quality of conversations between staff and children and the work of the speech and language specialist mean that children make particularly rapid progress in this area. Very low levels of personal, social and emotional development also improve rapidly. Teachers and other adults provide excellent role models and involve children in many collaborative opportunities so that children learn to care and empathise with each other.
- During their time at the nursery children become very confident, outgoing individuals who love to share their learning with others. They are extremely proud of their achievements and the achievements of their friends. They are eager to talk to adults about their work and demonstrate their skills. For instance, one child proudly retold the story of 'The Owl Babies' complete with dramatisation.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs make excellent progress. This is because everyone who works in the nursery understands and caters for them exceptionally well. The staff have very high expectations of all children and they value and nurture the children's capabilities ensuring that they all benefit from the activities offered.
- All groups of children make similar progress. Gaps between the achievement of boys and girls on entry are rapidly reduced. Children who speak English as an additional language make progress in line with that of their peers and children eligible for free school meals achieve equally well. The school makes sure that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Counting skills are developed very effectively in relevant contexts such as matching the right number of ice creams to children at lunchtime. Children learn to distinguish between sounds when working inside and outside and use their reading and writing skills to register themselves in the morning or label their paintings.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Outstanding teaching challenges children at all levels to be the best that they can be. Children respond very well to this because the activities provided are highly engaging and motivating. For instance children took great delight in creating water pictures using paint in syringes, whilst others marvelled at minibeasts.
- Teachers show great sensitivity and care. They are extremely knowledgeable and thoughtful in the way they provide for individuals and groups and children are drawn to them because of their warmth and enthusiasm. This means that children are very happy to spend extended periods of time developing skills and knowledge. This was evident with a group who spent almost two hours developing movement to music from a range of cultures.
- Conversations between adults and children are always productive and drive learning. Language

is modelled very effectively, vocabulary is extended and the children are constantly supported in articulating their thinking. Adults listen closely and respond to children's comments and questions, constantly developing ideas and extending understanding.

- Observations of children are used extremely well. Staff discuss these in detail so that different perspectives on learning are taken into account and used when planning future learning. Different forms of documentation record learning processes and these are displayed so that parents, staff, children and visitors, can reflect on, and revisit, learning. Leaders and managers recognise that not all staff feel equally confident in recording learning and generating next steps in this way.
- The staff are passionate about their vision for Early Years education and are dedicated to continually improving provision. This is because they are very well supported and motivated by leaders and managers. Together they provide a visually pleasing environment that is gloriously rich and stimulating generating very high levels of engagement from the children. It is joyful yet calm, promoting well-being, with different areas of learning that are linked inside and out.
- Teachers use digital technology to review learning together and encourage children to use a camera, so that they can also revisit their experiences, for instance when videoing tadpoles. Presentations on interactive whiteboards support the children's learning about lifecycles while projectors are used to create ambiance and stimulation in areas such as the sensory room.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Children have excellent attitudes to learning. They are keen to learn, eager to be involved and can concentrate well for sustained periods of time. In the morning when they arrive they settle very quickly and happily becoming totally engrossed in their activities.
- Relationships are excellent. Children learn to work together because adults demonstrate high levels of respect for each other, for the children and for their families. They support ways of resolving conflict that are constructive and caring. As a result children share resources, look after materials and equipment, take turns, wait patiently when necessary, and are quick to offer help and support to others.
- The nursery's belief in fairness and justice is a major influence in the setting. Staff value their diverse cultural community and have developed a very strong family atmosphere in which everyone is welcomed. Therefore children develop highly positive attitudes to others irrespective of race, gender, religion or capability. Difference and diversity are exceptionally well respected, included and celebrated.
- The nursery provides a very safe learning environment and staff take every opportunity to teach children how to be safe whether taking care when walking around the swings or making sure hands are washed after looking for worms and woodlice in the 'Secret Garden'. Parents agreed that their children are very well cared for and are safe at the nursery.
- In their response to the surveys, staff and parents expressed unreservedly positive views of the children's behaviour. Parents reported that their children always wanted to come to nursery and missed their teachers when at home. Attendance levels support this, as they are often above those typically found in nursery schools.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is an extremely capable leader who has maintained the outstanding nature of the nursery and continued to bring about improvements since the previous inspection. She is very well supported by the deputy headteacher. They have created an excellent team that includes not only highly dedicated teaching and non-teaching staff but also the administrative staff, cook and caretaker, who are all extremely supportive of the ethos.
- The pursuit of excellence is evident in the thoroughness of systems and policies. Procedures for managing staff performance are very rigorous. These are very clearly linked to development priorities and supported by innovative staff development. The process is checked for fairness so that it is linked to pay equitably.
- Children's progress is checked extremely closely and results are used very effectively to ensure that all children get the support they need in a timely manner. Documents describing projects undertaken by children are also used to reflect on the quality of learning, whether of individuals or groups, and to keep the methods used to teach under continual review.
- Play-based activities form the basis of the children's work and while children work very well independently adults are always on hand to guide and challenge. The outside area offers wonderful opportunities for exploration and investigation of the natural world as well as a multitude of other experiences. Inside, the studio space encourages creativity and other spaces offer excellent possibilities for learning across the curriculum. Visits away from the nursery enhance children's experience.
- Leaders and managers make sure that staff are able to work together very effectively. For instance joint planning sessions generate highly productive conversations related to the quality of children's learning. They also work closely with staff from the day-care provision to ensure that the children receive the very best possible care and education.
- Parents are very positive about their relationship with the nursery. One parent commented 'I don't know where I would be without this nursery'. They appreciate its inclusivity, with many opportunities to talk to staff and family workers. One father commented, 'It's just brilliant'.
- The local authority supports the school as needed. Their representative referred to the nursery as an 'oasis of quality' and she values the school as a place where staff from other settings can see outstanding practice at work.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors make an excellent contribution to the work of the school. They are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and children's achievement, well organised and capable of holding the school to account as well as being highly supportive. Governors have a good understanding of the performance of children, staff and headteacher and finances are well managed with the cost effectiveness of development initiatives taken into account very carefully. They know what the school does to reward good teaching and tackle any underperformance. They also know about how leaders manage the performance of teachers and other staff.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	103138
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	400586

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	3-4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	66
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Noran Flynn
Headteacher	Carmel Faulkner
Date of previous school inspection	9 March 2010
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