

Filton Avenue Nursery School and Children's Centre

Blakeley Road, Horfield, Bristol, BS7 0DL

Inspection dates

6–7 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children, parents and carers from a wide range of backgrounds receive an outstandingly supportive welcome from staff who are especially sensitive to their particular needs.
- Strong leadership by the headteacher and assistant headteacher working together has successfully brought the school through a period of substantial change in staff and leadership since the previous inspection.
- With raised staff morale and expertise and continued good support from knowledgeable governors, senior leaders are promoting a rapid pace of improvement.
- Teaching and learning are typically good because all staff work hard to get to know each child really well. Children settle very quickly, behave well and make good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers' efforts to develop very supportive relationships with children and their parents and carers are exemplary. They are determined to provide every child with a very wide, stimulating and enjoyable range of learning activities.
- Children achieve well during their time at the school. Many do even better in developing their self-confidence and social and physical skills.
- Good safeguarding procedures additionally mean that children feel very safe.
- One parent or carer, reflecting the views of most, wrote, 'Because children are in little groups my son has developed some strong friendships within a secure environment, which allows him to flourish.'
- High-quality and well-used outdoor learning facilities also help the children to greatly enjoy learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- When children are engaging in activities chosen by themselves opportunities are sometimes missed to further develop the aspects taught initially during adult-led
- Occasionally adults place too much emphasis on talking about what children have done rather than encouraging children to think and talk about what they have learned and how to

sessions.

improve, and this limits their progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors completed 23 observations of teaching and learning sessions and were accompanied by the headteacher and assistant headteacher during all of these observations.
- The inspectors observed the full breadth of the school's activities.
- Inspectors talked with many of the children. The lead inspector met with the Chair of the Governing Body and with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors held meetings with school staff, including senior leaders.
- The inspectors took account of 14 parents' and carers' responses to the Parent View online questionnaire in planning and undertaking the inspection and also received 16 staff questionnaires and one letter from a parent or carer. Inspectors took note of an analysis of the school's own survey of parents' and carers' views completed in September 2012. The team inspector also spoke informally with a number of parents and carers as they brought their children to school.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including teachers' planning, the school's own data on children's progress, leaders' checks on the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Alex Baxter, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Jo Curd

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school rates alongside some of the largest nursery schools in the Bristol area.
- An above average proportion of the children attending the school are from minority ethnic backgrounds and approximately a quarter of the children are of White British heritage.
- An above average number of children speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled children and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or by a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- An above average proportion of children whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are also receiving additional adult support.
- The school does not use any alternative educational provision.
- Most children attend on a part-time basis, either during the morning or afternoon sessions and some children stay for lunch.
- The nursery school is part of a children's centre. The children's centre, which provides a full range of family support services, was inspected separately during the previous year and that report is available on the Ofsted website.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that the skills, knowledge and understanding developed during adult-led sessions are extended across the full range of children's learning activities
 - making sure that children are more consistently encouraged to think and talk about what they have learned and how they can improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children are admitted into the Nursery at the age of three years with a wide range of skills that are generally below the levels expected for their age.
- In response to skilful teaching and support, children achieve well by the time they leave. Many children do even better in personal, social and emotional development, and also in extending their physical and creative skills because of stimulating learning in the school's very well-resourced indoor and outdoor facilities.
- For example, many children show great dexterity when skilfully riding tricycles. During a role-play journey into space they talked imaginatively about the planets and the aliens that might live there. At times, opportunities to further extend children's literacy and number skills are missed and, although improving, progress for some children is less effective in these areas.
- School assessments and children's responses during learning activities also show that children who are disabled or have special educational needs, and those who have English as an additional language, achieve well. This is because of the close and effective liaison between the children's allocated key person and parents and carers, and with bilingual and special educational needs staff.
- The role of the key person, the adult who retains a responsibility for a particular group of children, has been strengthened in recent years to make sure that all children are treated equally and benefit from individual attention from adults who know them well. As a result, recorded checks of children's progress and observations of teaching and learning show that additional funds for those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are used well to narrow the achievement gap and to help them progress as well as other children.
- In their groups, children enjoy listening to stories and are taught to listen to the sounds that letters make and are encouraged to talk about their favourite story characters. Children chose to look at books with each other and to take books home to look at with their parents and carers. The children's enjoyment of stories was further seen, for example, by their eager recognition of the Troll, during the teacher's imaginative role play about the Billy Goats Gruff. As a result, children make good progress in developing their early reading skills.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good, with outstanding features in the very caring way that all adults develop supportive relationships, manage behaviour and include all children equally.
- Staff are highly respectful of the breadth of children's cultural and religious backgrounds and make every effort to secure children's self-confidence by establishing close links with their parents and carers.
- Children and their parents and carers are warmly welcomed and invited to take part in the greeting activities that begin every session. During the group work that develops, key people use questioning well to make links with previous work and to extend children's thinking. For example, children talk about being kind and how to help each other at breakfast time.
- Most often when leading the learning teachers effectively review what has been learned and extend pupils' speaking and listening skills. For example, in their Chinese New Year topic children cooked, ate and talked about a Chinese meal. In response to adult questioning children developed their speaking skills by making connections and recalling their own experiences about favourite foods.
- This is not always the case because adults sometimes miss opportunities to interact and question children more precisely about how they could improve. At times, particularly when children have chosen their own activities, adults do not make enough connections with learning objectives introduced previously during adult-led activities and this limits children's progress.
- The school is already tackling these aspects by strengthening the role of the key person so that

they have an even deeper knowledge of what children in their groups need to do next to learn. The key person, in close liaison with specialist staff, also ensures strong support for disabled children, those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

- Improved checking of children’s progress and recording of activities in learning diaries ensure that planned support and adult-guided group work meet their needs and quicken children’s progress, more recently in mathematics.
- Teachers sustain a good balance between adult-led learning and activities chosen by the children themselves. Staff make full use of the high-quality facilities available, including ‘big books’ and computers, and especially the well-maintained and safe outside climbing and adventure equipment to promote children’s great enjoyment and extend their physical skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Children behave well and play sensibly together. Children show that they feel very safe in school and confidently approach adults to deal with any problems.
- They enjoy the range of outdoor activities and generally play and work hard. The children respond well to very caring adults and enjoy excellent relationships with them and with each other to underpin their full enjoyment of school.
- Children come to school eagerly and their confidence blossoms during greeting time at the start of each day. They see that staff and their parents and carers are on very good terms and are working together to keep them safe and happy.
- Children show good awareness and consideration for others, especially for example, handing the toast and milk around at breakfast time. They do not use the term bullying, but say with understanding that ‘We are friends’, and often warmly hug each other.
- Children with low self-esteem and emotional well-being, also derive the same level of enjoyment and quality of close relationships with other children because of very sensitive support they receive from caring adults.
- Most children throw themselves enthusiastically into their various learning activities, for example, demonstrating their traditional dances. At times, some children do not join in as much as they could, for example, during tidy up time, and need and receive close adult guidance to keep them learning.
- The children’s good achievement and social skills and their confident and regular attendance show that they are well prepared for their future education.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and assistant headteacher are very ambitious for the future development of the school. Their strong teamwork has steered the school through a period of staffing instability, restored a high level of staff morale and moulded a fully shared commitment for improvement.
- Together senior leaders have addressed the issues of the previous inspection, particularly to establish rigorous systems for checking the quality of teaching and children’s progress. These are now being used very effectively to quicken the rate of improvement.
- Governors and other leaders fulfil their responsibilities well, especially in sustaining high-quality facilities and resources in support of children’s equally enjoyable and successful learning across all the required areas of learning.
- For example, an abundance of adventurous, practical indoor and outdoor experiences and diverse cultural activities, such as making pancakes and Chinese dragons, strongly promote the children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school’s very well-developed links with parents and carers and with colleagues in the children’s centre and feeder infant schools also ensure that children continue their progress in a smooth and supportive manner.

- The needs of the school, children and staff are carefully considered so that staff's professional development and the targets set for their performance lead to improving teaching and children's learning.
- Carefully considered self-evaluation enables leaders to identify and tackle the right priorities for improvement and has been successful, for example, in developing the role of the key person to more closely focus on the needs of individual children and securing the capacity to improve into the future.
- More recently, positive steps have also been taken to further strengthen the work of middle managers in helping to bring about more high-quality teaching.
- Sustained high-quality care and rigorous risk, health and staff employment checks safeguard the children.
- The local authority provides light touch support to this good, improving school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body, in strong support of senior staff, has played a reassuring and stabilising role in bringing the school forward through a period of staff change. Governors have sustained and improved their in-depth knowledge of early years practice through frequent visits to the school, regular meetings with senior leaders and parents and carers and full engagement in regular training. They are effective in support of senior staff in strengthening the use of setting objectives to link teachers' progression through the pay scales with improving teaching and learning, for example, to develop the role of the special educational needs coordinator. Governors have also supported senior staff in improving the way the quality of teaching is checked, and in securing more accessible and accurate information about children's progress. Through their various committees, governors' regular discussions and questioning of senior leaders about children's progress in relation to Early Years Foundation Stage expectations have secured their understanding of how teaching impacts on children's achievement. Governors also play a beneficial role in promoting close links with parents and carers, ensuring equality of opportunity and checking that children's well-being is securely safeguarded. They ensure that additional funds for disabled children, those with special educational needs and those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are used effectively by providing the additional staff needed to help them progress as well as other children.

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	108894
Local authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	401021

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 of pupils on the school roll	151
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dan Steele
Headteacher	Jackie McGregor
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 December 2009
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