

Highters Heath Nursery School

11 School Road, Warstock, Birmingham, B14 4BH

Inspection dates 11–12 September 2014

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Early years provision | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Excellent arrangements to prepare children for nursery enable children to settle quickly. Parents are pleased with these arrangements.
- Relationships between staff, parents and children are warm and caring. They help children to make good progress and achieve well.
- The teaching is good because learning activities are carefully planned and well resourced to stimulate and interest the children.
- Assessments are used regularly to track each child's performance to ensure they are on course to make at least good progress.
- Children behave well. Adults' expectations are high and so, from day one, children quickly learn the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.
- The headteacher has an accurate picture of the quality of teaching within the nursery. Her monitoring of teaching is thorough, identifies what changes are necessary, and leads to improvement.
- Staff and governors work effectively together to deal with identified priorities for improvement.
- Governors' involvement in the work of the nursery has improved since the previous inspection, particularly in relation to the nursery's self-evaluation, which is generally accurate.
- Children receive suitably planned activities which enable them to learn effectively. These promote all aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Everyone, including governors, works happily together to ensure that children learn as they play in an environment that is secure and safe.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of all that is provided for their children.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Adults do not always use the wealth of assessment information that is available, when they plan activities. As a result, the different needs and abilities of children are not always addressed precisely enough.
- Not all adults consistently ensure that every child is listening, looking and taking part when they learn in group situations.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with half a day's notice and took place over two days.
- The inspector observed seven parts of sessions, taught by two teachers and four teaching assistants. Almost all observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, such as the nursery's self-evaluation form, the planning which adults use to support their teaching, information about children's performance, children's learning journeys, and safeguarding documents.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, parents, children and representatives from the governing body and the local authority.
- Six responses to the staff questionnaire were analysed and considered.
- There were too few responses to take account of Parent View, Ofsted's on-line survey. The inspector, however, analysed responses from 54 parents to a questionnaire sent out by the nursery to all parents in July 2014.

Inspection team

Nina Bee, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Information about this school

- Highters Heath is smaller than the average-sized nursery and provides part-time and full-time nursery education for 52 children.
- A large majority of children come from White British families; the remainder come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs supported by Early Years action is below average.
- A few children are supported at Early Years action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- A few children speak English as an additional language.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
 - when adults plan and deliver activities, they use information about children’s achievement to identify more precisely how they will adapt activities to suit the different abilities and needs of the children
 - all children are taught how to sit smartly and listen carefully, and that they are fully engaged and sustain concentration during group activities.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and her staff are an ambitious team whose main focus is to enable all children to receive the best. They carefully check that there is no discrimination and ensure all children are treated equally. Senior leaders track children's progress carefully and ensure that at least good or better progress is being maintained in all areas. As a result, there is very little difference between the achievement of different groups of children.
- The nursery has rigorous systems to check the quality of teaching. The headteacher has an excellent understanding of the strengths in the teaching and what can still be improved.
- The way activities are planned is well-balanced and focuses effectively on all areas of learning, which are applicable for these young children, as well as giving them many opportunities to further their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through play, children learn about the different celebrations and cultures in modern Britain and within the wider world. Children from different backgrounds get along well with each other. Colourful maps are strategically placed so that they can see them as they walk about the building. These not only enable children to develop a picture of where they live but also of the world around them.
- The local authority provides good support when necessary, for example, by helping to develop the role of the governors.
- Parents speak highly and very positively of the nursery and appreciate the good start it gives their children. The responses to the questionnaire which the school recently sent out were overwhelmingly positive.
- Well-established procedures and practices have enabled the staff and governors to maintain and develop nursery provision since the previous inspection and so show the capacity to improve further.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. For example, they ensure that policies and procedures are regularly reviewed. They take up additional training that is offered and are well informed by the headteacher. Consequently, governors are able to challenge and support when necessary because they are fully involved in processes related to the nursery's development and improvement.
 - Governors have a clear grasp of systems in place, such as the importance of monitoring the quality of teaching, the way adults' performance is judged and its link to their professional development and pay structure.
 - Governors have recently been involved in improving the security around the school. Safeguarding arrangements are thorough and ensure that the building and surroundings are secure and children are kept safe.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of children is good and sometimes outstanding. As a result of the good focus on children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and adults' high expectations, children soon learn how to behave well in different situations. Children from many different walks of life learn well as they play amicably alongside each other.
- The preparation for entrance into nursery life is thought out extremely carefully by staff, and parents are fully involved. As a result, almost all children arrive happily each morning, when for many nursery life is a relatively new experience. Children quickly develop very positive attitudes to all that is on offer and these contribute to their learning and progress.
- There are systems to record incidents of poor behaviour or racism. Very few have been recorded over the last two years and there have been no exclusions.

- The nursery's work to keep children safe and secure is good. Two minor safety issues were discussed with and later addressed by the headteacher. Staff and governors are well aware of the importance of risk assessments, and these are developed when and where necessary. All personnel who have regular contact with the children are suitably checked.
- Although attendance is not statutory for children of this age, nursery staff work effectively with parents to monitor attendance so that most children's attendance is good.
- Parents have no concerns regarding behaviour or the safety of their children. They are clear about procedures and practices, know they are welcome in the nursery and that any concerns will be dealt with appropriately.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good-quality teaching enables children to make good gains in all areas of learning over time. Children's good progress is evident in their learning journeys and the nursery's assessment information about individual children's progress and the progress of particular year groups.
- Children have good opportunities to develop an idea of making marks on paper and learn how to control pens, pencils and paint brushes. They do this with enthusiasm, showing a developing range of control. Children who are very new to the nursery were seen writing with water, outside, enjoying singing simple rhymes with staff and their parents, and displaying an idea of basic counting and number recognition.
- Indoor activities are usually well planned and focus well on the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. They interest the children. The outside area is stimulating, safe and secure, and enables children to learn about many things, including the seasons and how things grow, as well as how to build using construction toys, to count and to develop writing skills.
- The good range of activities helps most children to develop positive attitudes to learning. Outstanding learning was observed, for example, in a small group as children focused on modelling using dough. Adult interaction was skilful and expectations were high regarding listening and learning how to make a model from dough. As a result, not only did one child make a delightful model of a snail, but she then showed a little boy who joined her how to make one as well!
- When adults lead learning in small or larger groups they generally have high expectations regarding how they expect children to sit, listen and stay focused on what they are doing. Most children sit and listen attentively. Occasionally, however, the need to sit smartly and listen carefully is not promoted well enough and learning is not good for the few children who become disengaged.
- At times, adults do not use assessment data precisely enough when they plan activities for mixed-ability groups. Some children need more reinforcement to understand, while others are not always suitably challenged. On these occasions, learning is not rapid enough.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good in all areas of learning and for all groups of children. This is confirmed by observations during the inspection, past nursery performance data and parents' perceptions of how well their children are achieving. Learning journeys, developed for all children, clearly show the good and outstanding achievement children make during their time in the nursery.
- Children learn well because well-planned activities and carefully thought-out routines provide a good structure for their learning and engage their interest. For example, as they integrated with each other during snack time, adults promoted personal hygiene effectively, reinforcing the importance of washing hands before using knives to spread their toast with butter. Children were given good opportunities to think for themselves, for example, whether they had enough butter on their toast or too much. Much

enjoyment was had and adult questioning was clear and moved individual learning on well.

- Virtually no children come into the nursery with levels that are above those typical for their ages. The nursery's performance data show that most children reach levels typical for their ages, by the time they leave. In relation to their starting points, this represents at least good and sometimes outstanding progress.
- The nursery tracks the progress of the more able, as well as that of individuals and other groups in different cohorts, carefully. There is no evidence, in past nursery data, to suggest the more able make better or worse gains in their learning than any other groups. Observations during the inspection confirmed this.
- Likewise, disadvantaged children make similar gains in their learning when compared with other groups. Disabled children and those who have special educational needs achieve well because their needs are identified at an early stage and they are supported sensitively in all they do.
- The children who are learning English as an additional language receive skilful support to develop their language. Consequently, they make similar gains to their peers.

The early years provision

is good

- As all children in this school are in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the report sections above evaluate the school's quality.

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

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|--------------------------------|------------|
| Unique reference number | 103134 |
| Local authority | Birmingham |
| Inspection number | 447915 |

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

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|--|------------------------------|
| Type of school | Nursery |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 3–5 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 52 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Phillip Styles |
| Headteacher | Claire Quinlan |
| Date of previous school inspection | 22 September 2011 |
| Telephone number | 0121 4742356 |
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