

# Grace Owen Nursery School

Hague Row, Parkhill, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S2 5SB

**Inspection dates** 21–22 October 2014

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The executive headteacher and senior staff provide a clear vision and strong commitment to high standards in all their work. As a result, the school has maintained a good quality of teaching and learning despite significant staff and management changes since the previous inspection.
- Leaders are supported by a well-trained staff and an effective governing body who share the executive headteacher's drive and ambition.
- All groups of children make good progress from their individual starting points in all areas of learning. They are consequently well prepared for the Reception classes when they leave.
- Children's speaking and listening skills are particularly well developed. They follow instructions well and enjoy participating in a good range of story-telling, rhymes and songs.
- The school provides good quality support for disabled children and those with special educational needs. Skilled staff and good liaison with specialist services ensure that children make at least good progress and are eager to learn.
- The most able children achieve well because they quickly learn to be independent and make their own decisions. They are curious about the world around them and enjoy solving problems.
- The quality of teaching is good. Staff have high expectations and develop children's vocabulary and understanding well through carefully considered questions.
- Children's behaviour is outstanding and they feel very safe and secure. They are very polite and friendly and quickly develop self-confidence and awareness. Relationships are excellent.
- The school promotes children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Children of all abilities learn to share, take turns and consider the views and opinions of others.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, although the teaching of reading is good overall, staff miss opportunities to link written letters and words more closely to the spoken language in their discussions and activities with children.
- Sometimes the next steps for children to achieve in their learning is not clearly identified in the otherwise good quality observations of their progress.
- The use of assessment is not fully developed in order to compare the progress of all groups of children to ensure that they are achieving the best they can.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching during the morning and afternoon sessions over two days, including joint observations with the executive headteacher. The inspector also conducted several learning walks throughout the school.
- Discussions were held with children throughout the sessions, the Chair of the Governing Body and other members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and members of staff, including senior leaders and other staff with particular responsibilities.
- The inspector took account of the 10 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), the results from the school's own consultations with parents and spoke to many parents during the inspection. The responses from staff to the inspection questionnaires were also considered.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including: information on current and previous children's progress, the school's plans for improvement, the management of teachers' performance, and documentation and records relating to children's behaviour and safety.

## Inspection team

Andrew Clark, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average sized nursery school. It offers morning or afternoon provision between 9.00 and 12 noon and 12 noon and 3.00pm for 39 full-time equivalent places.
- The proportion of disabled children and children with special educational needs who receive early years action plus support is approximately one in twelve. A further one in four children is supported at early years action.
- Over a half of the children are of minority ethnic heritage.
- Approximately one-quarter of children speaks English as an additional language. There are 11 different languages spoken in the school.
- There is day care unit on the site. This is managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection.
- The school became part of a hard federation with Manor Lodge Primary School in 2013 after the previous inspection. The executive headteacher was appointed in April 2014 after a period of temporary leadership and a new teacher was appointed in September 2014.
- The teacher supports other local schools on specific literacy projects.

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

- Build on the already good teaching to accelerate all children's progress by:
  - ensuring that more opportunities are taken to link the spoken word to the written word
  - making full use of observations of children's achievement to plan the next steps in learning precisely.
- Improve the procedures to measure children's progress to identify the achievement of different groups of children more accurately and ensure that their needs are fully met and any gaps are reduced.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher and senior leadership team have a clear view for school improvement which is shared by staff, the governing body and parents. Leaders are ambitious for raising achievement and making a good contribution to early years education within the local authority. There is a good environment for learning and very good relationships with parents.
- The senior and middle leaders provide good role models and are skilled in improving the quality of teaching and raising expectations. The teacher has significant experience as a lead early years teacher for the local authority. She is rapidly strengthening aspects of the monitoring and development of teaching skills alongside the nursery manager. As a result, all staff have high expectations for children and their own professional development.
- The school has well-established rigorous systems to measure and track children's achievements from their starting points to the time they leave school across all areas of learning. In particular, procedures to evaluate the needs of disabled children and those with special educational needs are imaginative and robust. There is close partnership work with the day care provision to share information effectively. However, the tracking does not fully identify the achievement of different groups of children to fully inform future development planning and improve the quality of teaching further. The school has identified this as a key priority.
- The school receives good support from the local authority. It has worked closely with the local authority on projects on speaking and reading throughout the early years to develop teaching within the school and the wider early years community. The local authority took a key role in ensuring consistent leadership through the federation, other teaching appointments and developing the role of the governing body.
- Staff are accountable for the progress children achieve and the teacher has to meet specific criteria relating to this to move to the next salary level.
- The school is well prepared to tackle any issues of discrimination well and these are extremely rare. It promotes equality of opportunity effectively and this contributes to the well-being of staff, children and their families.
- The school makes a good contribution to staff development through its support and training for students and apprentices. Many of the current staff came through this route in the school and play a good role in developing future early years practitioners.
- Children's communication and literacy skills are at the heart of the school's curriculum. It promotes aspects of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Many activities encourage British values of tolerance and understanding and encourage children to make decisions for themselves. For example, literature and well-planned themes develop children's knowledge and understanding of different faiths and beliefs and visits and visitors promote their local heritage. The warm relationships throughout the nursery contribute strongly to many aspects of children's social development.
- The school works closely with parents and keeps them very well informed of their child's progress through regular discussions and reports. The detailed and attractively presented regular reports and learning observations are particularly valued. The parents hold the school in high regard as a result.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is led and managed well. Following federation, the governing body has undertaken reviews with the local authority and subsequently with the executive headteacher to sharpen their effectiveness in meeting the needs of both schools. As a result, it provides good levels of both support and challenge to the nursery. The governing body is knowledgeable about early years development and makes good use of a range of data on children's achievement and the impact of teaching to hold the leadership to account for school improvement. This is complemented by the governors' regular learning walks and other activities to gather first-hand evidence. Governors ensure that the school's aims for the quality of learning are central to its work.
  - There are good procedures to ensure that statutory requirements are met, including safeguarding procedures. Governors are fully involved in making decisions as to whether teaching staff should be rewarded with salary increases and review targets for the executive headteacher. Finances are well managed by closely monitoring the budget and ensuring that expenditure is aimed at securing good achievement.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding****Behaviour**

- The behaviour of children is outstanding. Staff quickly establish very strong relationships with children and their parents. They ensure that children are familiar with the setting and the staff before they start school regularly. Staff spend time getting to know children's interests and abilities and allaying any concerns their parents may have. There are excellent links with the on-site day-care and other pre-school providers which contributes to very effective induction for all children.
- The children are very polite and considerate towards each other. They listen to each other and take turns patiently. This is in direct response to the excellent example all adults set. For example, staff greet all children at the start of the sessions by name with a friendly greeting and make certain that they receive an appropriate reply. Registration periods engender a sense of fun and belonging by, for example, calling names in different languages chosen by the children and building their names into songs and rhymes.
- Children are eager to come to school and several parents comment on how they rarely want to leave at the end of the day. Children's attendance is very good and carefully monitored to ensure that parents are given any appropriate support on the rare occasion there may be any concern.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is outstanding. Children feel very safe and are looked after well. Parents are very confident that their children receive the highest levels of care.
- Staff are very vigilant and act quickly to ensure that children are engaged and happy. They all know which children may be in vulnerable circumstances or need additional support. They act very quickly to praise or distract children on the rare occasion they are unhappy or upset. As a result, unkind or thoughtless behaviour is extremely rare.
- The school makes very good use of children's literature to explore emotions and sensitive situations. They discuss differences and similarities in relationships and a range of beliefs and ideas. As a result, there is very little or no bullying.
- Children learn to manage risks and make decisions successfully. For example, they learn to use real hammers and nails in their woodwork safely and to use appropriate sharp knives in carving, cutting and moulding different media. In the spacious outdoor area they are taught effectively to climb the tiered play spaces and ride their vehicles safely. Projects with the emergency services and road safety role play and other similar activities prepare children well for safe transfer to the next stage in their education.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- The staff establish a calm and purposeful learning environment which ensures that strong relationships with children and adults are established quickly and effectively. This is central to the school's good quality of teaching and children's secure learning. A significant proportion of children have difficulty in establishing relationships and managing their emotions when they start school. The fact that staff enable them to overcome this quickly, contributes significantly to the good progress children make.
- Children's early communication and literacy skills are taught well overall. There are rigorous procedures to evaluate children's skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing accurately and to track their progress. Staff are well trained in developing children's speaking, listening and early reading skills, including phonics, and there is a well planned teaching programme underpinning children's learning. Stories, rhymes and songs are used well to enrich all aspects of children's learning. In particular, they provide a common basis of knowledge for children to develop their vocabulary and understanding and use of the English language.
- The teaching of mathematics is good and children make good progress as a result. Children are taught to count and order numbers systematically and group activities are well planned to challenge all abilities. Many games and activities help children sort by shape, patterns and size and staff enrich and develop mathematical vocabulary and reasoning through well-chosen questions. For example, staff discuss the length of different pipes children use outside to roll balls down and encourage them to compare size and estimate the impact on the distance it will roll. They help children sort the autumn leaves they are busy moving in their wheelbarrows by colour and shape.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs receive good support for all aspects of their learning. Accurate and regular assessment is used effectively to set precise targets for these children's achievement and to ensure that they receive any specialist support, including the regular services of an educational psychologist and speech therapists. Additional support is provided to targeted groups of learners through the nurture programme when, for example, there is an extra focus on speaking skills or

on managing their own behaviour, linked to their classroom experiences.

- Staff ensure that children have time to reflect and express their own ideas. Children's vocabulary and understanding of new concepts are improved in response to all staff's thoughtful questioning. Staff engage well with children in their role play and individual work by helping them shape their ideas and form their own questions.
- Children's reasoning and decision-making skills are well developed through practical problem-solving activities and daily routines which encourage them to plan their learning and review their success. They follow the picture timetable for some of the session and discuss what they will do next and why.
- The classroom is well organised and resources are attractive and enticing. Children know precisely where items are stored. Tools and resources are arranged to contribute to the children's knowledge of colour and shape, for example, and encourage them to tidy in a systematic way.
- Although children make good progress in communication skills overall, some opportunities are missed to further embed children's knowledge of written letters and words to the activities they undertake or key points in group discussions.
- The procedures to assess children's progress and plan for the next steps in their learning are good and shared well with the staff team and parents. Evaluative records are kept on a daily basis of children's achievement in all areas of learning and generally matched to challenging targets. Very occasionally, however, staff do not use the monitoring of children's progress to identify the next steps in their learning precisely enough to help them make the most rapid progress possible.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children of all abilities make good progress from their individual starting points and achieve well. Many children start school with speaking, listening and other literacy skills which restrict their ability to learn quickly and to benefit from all aspects of education. There is also a significant proportion of children who have difficulties making relationships and managing their emotions when they start in the nursery. By the time they leave the nursery, all children are much better prepared for learning and ready for their next stage of education in the Reception Year.
- Children's listening and speaking skills are developed well. Staff ensure that there is a calm and quiet environment so that everyone can be heard. Children learn to express their thoughts and ideas with confidence, including those who initially find this difficult, and to appreciate that their contributions are valued. They learn to refine and improve their expression with greater clarity and use of a rich vocabulary. For example, when carving a face on a pumpkin all the group offer their ideas for the cuts to make and the facial features they wish to create. The teacher extends their vocabulary through questions on the depth of the cut, whether shapes are round or zigzag, etc.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs achieve well during their time in the nursery. Sometimes they make excellent progress. Their needs are identified at an early stage, so that an effective level of support can be put in place quickly and consistently. Their progress is carefully and very regularly tracked, so that emerging weaknesses can be addressed. The children become increasingly independent and able to manage their own learning and several parents comment on this.
- Disadvantaged children also make good progress because their needs are carefully analysed and supported, for example, through the nurture group activities and the flexible provision the school provides so that children have more access to learning. As a result, the school reduces any gap in the achievement of these children and others in its care.
- Children make good progress in early reading overall. They learn that print has meaning and can provide instruction and guidance. For example, they follow their animal name cards to see what groups they are working in at the start of the day. They often quickly learn to read their names in different forms and to begin to recognise initial letters and the sounds they make (phonics) and some whole words.
- Children enjoy books. They learn to follow the order of the pages in books with pictures and a few words and follow the story with increasing independence. They love listening to stories and rhymes and show a good recall of the key facts. For example, they recount enthusiastically and accurately the story of Sita and Rama from the previous day, enjoying the repeated phrases about the 'beautiful princess'.
- Children show confidence in using their mathematical knowledge and make good progress, including a significant proportion who start with limited ability to recall and order numbers to five. They respond quickly to high expectations for counting sequentially and develop their understanding of simple addition and subtraction, such as one more than and one less, for example, in sorting autumn leaves outdoors or arranging rows of conkers. They learn to write individual numbers and to set them out in simple sums.
- The most able children develop their reading, writing and numeracy skills well and some are learning to

read simple books and apply their knowledge of letter sounds through spelling words and forming their own sentences. They count accurately to beyond 20 and recognise patterns in number sequences. They develop a good knowledge of capacity, for example, by pouring glittery sand from different shaped brass containers and estimating accurately how many they will hold. This small group of children builds well on the good communication skills they start school with to express their ideas articulately and respond to others' questions and answers. A key feature of their learning is the independence they acquire and the ability to make decisions and organise their own work.

- Children with English as an additional language make good progress. Those children with little English when they start in the nursery quickly learn to participate effectively in the full range of activities, because their purpose is clear and resources are easily available. Regular routines and repeated songs and phrases promote rapid learning in many cases. The school provides specialist support in the child's heritage language where this is needed, including the use of information and communication technology (ICT).
- Children's physical skills are well developed. Several children start with limited ability to control smaller movements, such as holding a crayon or paint brush. Through many opportunities to trace lines in the sand or draw and paint with a wide range of media, children often make rapid progress in these areas. The use of the exciting outdoor facilitates boosts children's ability to run, jump, climb, roll and ride. In particular, they learn to negotiate the large steps and play in and around the trees with safety and precision.
- Children are curious and keen to investigate and find out about the world around them and make good progress in this. For example, they eagerly take their magnifying glasses and hunt for the caterpillars through the woodland leaves, investigating and sorting leaves by colour, shape and pattern. They fill tubes with water using syringes in the water play and explore the impact on the water when they squirt them out. Children learn to collaborate and work together well, including those who start school with difficulties in establishing relationships and managing their emotions. This was very evident, for example, when they shared the task of shovelling autumn leaves into wheel barrows and moving to another area to sort them.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106975
<b>Local authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	442647

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

<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>	39
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Sheffield Local Authority
<b>Chair</b>	Christine Wilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joanne Bradshaw
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 November 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 272 2541
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