

Flatts Nursery School

Ashworth Green, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, WF13 2SU

Inspection dates 9–10 December 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- This school is a very special place where each child is valued as an individual and helped to reach their full potential. The enthusiasm, enjoyment and love of learning found here is infectious.
- The inspirational headteacher provides excellent leadership for her extremely dedicated and hard-working team. All staff understand the needs of the school very well and are constantly driving further improvement. Governors are highly supportive, knowledgeable and dedicated.
- Children's well-being is given the highest priority. A very friendly and caring atmosphere ensures that everyone feels part of the school community. Parents are extremely supportive of the work of the school.
- Children's behaviour is excellent. Expectations are very high and, as a result, children quickly learn to respect each other and work together.
- Children's safety is paramount. Children feel very secure in school and learn rapidly how to keep themselves safe. They are confident and eager to take on new challenges.
- Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Everyone is proud to be part of the school community.
- Teaching is outstanding. Carefully planned activities ensure that each child learns to the best of their ability. Rigorous and very well-delivered small-group activities promote excellent early reading and writing skills.
- The nursery is vibrant and very well resourced. The outdoor area is extensive and very challenging. All opportunities are taken to extend children's learning and particularly, their language skills.
- Teaching of early mathematical skills is also excellent. Currently, however, children have limited opportunities to consolidate this learning through self-chosen play.
- Children are sensitively supported as they start nursery and carefully helped to feel secure and comfortable. This results in almost all children making rapid progress and achieving exceptionally well from their starting points. They leave nursery well prepared for school.
- Children who need extra support are quickly identified. They receive this help through high quality, individual programmes which are skilfully taught. This means that they make the same excellent progress from their starting points as other children.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed a wide range of sessions, both indoors and out, including those led directly by adults and activities which children had chosen for themselves.
- The inspector looked at a sample of children’s learning journals and at work displayed around the nursery.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, members of staff, representatives of the governing body and an external consultant who has worked regularly with the school.
- The inspector spoke to several parents and took account of the school’s own consultations with parents. There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for the inspector to be able to assess them.
- The inspector looked at a number of documents, including data on children’s progress, documentation relating to safeguarding, reports on teaching and the most recent report from the local authority representative.

Inspection team

Nora Waugh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average-sized nursery school. The majority of children attend for three hours every morning or every afternoon. Some children come for two-and-a-half days.
- Children start nursery in the term after their third birthday and stay until transferring to the Reception class in one of several local schools.
- Approximately three quarters of children are from ethnic minority heritages. Most of these children speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs is below average. Eight children currently receive extra help for language development while in nursery.
- The school is designated as a local authority Speech, Language and Communication Needs resource. There are no children currently accessing this facility and there have not been for some time.
- The school shares a building with Flatts Day-Care Service which is run by the governing body. It is subject to a separate Ofsted inspection.
- The school holds the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark, silver Eco-Schools award and is recognised as an Investor in People.
- The school is involved in supporting high quality early years practice in the local area through the Dewsbury Learning Partnership and the West Yorkshire Teaching Schools Alliance.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance the excellent teaching of mathematical skills by giving children more opportunities to explore the mathematical potential of real objects and situations.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Everybody involved in this school is highly motivated, hard working and determined to do everything possible to ensure that all children succeed. They share a vision of a nurturing and caring community based on respect for children and their families. Teamwork is excellent. Led by the exceptional headteacher, the school never stands still.
- Leaders, including the governing body, have an outstanding understanding of the strengths of the school and what is needed to ensure that it continues to move forward. In a changing climate with reduced resources they have been clear in their priorities. A recent focus on promoting both children's well-being and language skills has led to further improvements in already outstanding teaching and learning.
- Middle leaders are encouraged to take additional responsibilities and have been instrumental in steering some of the improvements seen in teaching and learning.
- Checking on performance is exceptionally thorough. All staff have targets that are linked effectively to salary progression. Personal plans are used to improve performance and identify training opportunities.
- The curriculum is rich, varied and exciting. Regular visits and visitors extend children's experiences. Outdoor learning is highly valued and allows children to explore and develop their interests. A very well-thought-through programme of activities in the forest area adds an extra dimension to children's learning.
- The promotion of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional and a significant strength of the school. All cultures are valued. Children learn with wonder and enthusiasm about the religious importance of, and the traditions linked to for example, both Eid and Christmas. The whole community is involved in these important events in nursery.
- The school actively promotes equality of opportunity and is highly inclusive in every aspect of its work. The ethos is wonderfully warm, welcoming and nurturing, preparing children very well for life in modern Britain. They learn about respect and tolerance and what these mean in practice. Friendships are formed and everyone is very caring towards each other.
- Parents are extremely supportive and very happy that their children come to this school. They are very friendly, relaxed and comfortable there. They value what the school does for their children. As one said, 'because our children are so happy, we are happy'. All were impressed at how quickly their children settle.
- The school has excellent partnerships with a wide range of agencies which enables children to receive additional support when they need it. The school also works closely with local further and higher education institutions and regularly supports students.
- Policies and procedures for safeguarding are extremely thorough and reviewed regularly by the headteacher and the designated governor. They ensure that all aspects are considered and children fully protected. Levels of training are well above the minimum requirements.
- The school works well with the local authority which offers light-touch support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school very well. They value its standing in the community and its inclusive, nurturing ethos. They have a detailed knowledge of how well children learn and of the strengths of the school. They understand data and appreciate how strong teaching is. They know where to go for additional information when needed and are not afraid to ask hard questions.
 - Governors are proactive in developing their own skills. They have an excellent understanding of their role and are careful to ensure that their statutory responsibilities are carried out. As part of their careful financial management they ensure that staff have met targets before they are rewarded financially.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of children is outstanding. Children learn routines quickly because they are clearly explained and established from the start. Songs, pictures and signing are all used to support children with limited English. Praise is used very well to encourage children in achieving the very high expectations of staff. Children here feel good about themselves.
- Nursery children are still learning to be part of a larger group and any minor dispute is quickly and effectively managed. Staff are very sensitive and highly consistent in their approach. Children are encouraged to help each other and are very caring.
- Nursery is a very happy place. Children sing or smile to themselves as they play. They love learning and

are developing an enjoyment and levels of concentration and persistence that will equip them very well for their next steps in learning.

Safety

- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is outstanding.
- Children each have a special worker who spends time getting to know them and their families before they start nursery. This leads to exceptionally good relationships and means that parents are very confident leaving their children in nursery. They have no concerns at all over safety.
- Children are taught to keep themselves safe. The outdoor area has some very challenging aspects and paths that can be slippery. Children know exactly what they need to do and discuss possible risks knowledgeably.
- They are also becoming very knowledgeable about caring for the environment and the world around us. They are very aware of the need to turn off taps or to switch off lights. They are involved in recycling and in growing their own food. 'Fellas at Flatts' involves fathers and grandfathers in nursery, but because they have a vegetable patch they also help children to learn about healthy eating and where food comes from.
- Attendance is good. Good habits in coming to nursery and punctuality are actively encouraged. Each half term parents receive a certificate showing how many sessions their children have attended. Unexplained absences are quickly followed up.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching is of a consistently high quality. Adults are very knowledgeable about how children learn and they plan activities to inspire and support them. Enjoyment is high and children are excited to come to school. They know their routines and they know what is expected of them. Children are confident and independent learners.
- Teaching of language skills is exceptional. Many children come to school with limited English. Lively teaching with clear explanations, sometimes repeated in their home language, and with well-prepared visual resources mean that most children's language skills improve rapidly. For those who need extra support, well-established and highly effective intervention programmes are put in place.
- All children participate daily in small 'Super Sounder' groups developing their ability to listen to sounds in words. Workshops for parents help them to support their children at home. Children have fun speaking like 'baby bear' or the 'bad troll' while they are learning about different sounds that their voices can make. As a result, almost all children leave nursery at the typical level for their age in literacy skills and many are above that.
- Teaching of mathematical skills is excellent. Children count confidently and recognise numbers. There are, however, comparatively few opportunities for them to develop their mathematical thinking and challenge themselves through play.
- In addition to adult-led activities and small-group sessions, children have excellent opportunities to learn through play activities they have chosen. Learning about the nativity through role play, children were dressing as farm animals and creating a 'den' as the stable. Other children had asked to make snowflakes and were fascinated at the patterns they were cutting. Outside, children were improving their physical skills walking along a balancing course which they had made from crates.
- The grounds are extensive and in the 'top forest' children can look down on the school building and view things from a different perspective. They learn about staying safe on steep paths on a winter walk while also observing bare branches and thinking about how the wind has blown leaves from the trees.
- The outstanding teaching is underpinned by very careful planning and assessment. Children's learning journals show clearly what children know, can do and what they need to learn next. Careful planning then ensures that each child is challenged on a daily basis to do more than they could before. This information is regularly shared with parents so that they can support children's learning at home.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Most children enter nursery with skills below those typical for their age group. Some children are achieving less than this, especially in communication and language. By the time they leave nursery almost all children are achieving at least levels typical for their age group. This represents outstanding progress from their starting points.
- When children first come into nursery their abilities are carefully assessed. Particular emphasis is put on

finding out how confident they are and how well they concentrate on play and learning. Following this assessment, children who need extra help have individual plans implemented and, as a result, quickly develop good learning and social skills.

- For children whose language needs development careful assessments show whether there is a language and communication difficulty or whether the child is at an early stage of learning English. For those who are still learning English, exciting and interesting activities with lots of visual prompts and bilingual support enable them to make rapid progress. Those who have complex language and communication needs also make excellent progress because of the quality of the tailored support they receive.
- Children's early literacy development is supported through extremely well-planned group activities. Progress in early reading and writing skills is excellent with many children achieving above expected levels in this area. Children's mathematical development is a little behind their literacy skills when they start nursery. Progress is extremely good but by the time they leave nursery children's mathematical skills are still behind their abilities in literacy.
- Girls come into nursery ahead of boys in their achievement. Boys make excellent progress because activities are planned, particularly in the outdoor area, to appeal to them but they do not quite catch up with girls, whose progress is also outstanding.
- There is some variation in the abilities of children of ethnic minority heritage when they start nursery but many are still at an early stage of learning English. They make excellent progress in this and by the time they leave nursery most are at or close to levels typical for children of their age.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs receive sensitive, skilled support which enables them to be fully included in all activities. They make very good progress from their starting points with some reaching levels typical for their age.
- The most-able children receive exactly the right level of challenge to develop their thinking further. They are encouraged to work carefully and solve problems, leading to high levels of achievement by the end of nursery.

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	107592
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	448093

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	2–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	58
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Disken
Headteacher	Julie Helm
Date of previous school inspection	29 February 2012
Telephone number	01924 325290
Fax number	01924 325290
Email address	office.flatts@kirkleeseducation.uk

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