

# Bloomsbury Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103138
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	286570
<b>Inspection date</b>	7 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joyce Cox

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Children's centre
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	70
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bob Donnelly
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clare Williams
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 July 2001
<b>School address</b>	Bloomsbury Street Nechells Birmingham B7 5BX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01214 642034
<b>Fax number</b>	01214 641828

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This former nursery school was designated as a children's centre in January 2006. This status was achieved through the school's previous successes as a nursery and a neighbourhood nursery and because of its strong partnership with Nechells Association for Community Education (NACE). The centre provides an extensive range of integrated services and day-care facilities for families and children as well as full-time nursery provision for children aged three and four. The children who attend the centre, in many cases, come from families that face challenging social and economic circumstances. Children's attainment when they start in the nursery is well below the expected levels and particularly low in their communication and personal and social skills. An average number of children have learning difficulties or disabilities but approximately half have delayed speech and language development. Three quarters of the children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a very small number are at an early stage of learning English.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

The centre provides an outstanding start to children's education. Staff successfully achieve their aim, which is to create 'a learning community where individuals are nurtured to achieve their dreams and hopes'. Parents and the local and wider communities appreciate and enjoy the excellent facilities on offer. One parent, summing up the views of many, wrote, 'This nursery has a wonderful ethos and hardworking staff who continuously strive to maintain the best for the children.' High quality nursery education has been sustained over a number of years because the headteacher has built a highly competent staff team and has personally maintained a huge enthusiasm for her job. Leadership and management are excellent, which has ensured that everyone constantly strives to improve and is not content to rest on the many successes already achieved. This is evident in the very skilful way in which the headteacher and staff have managed the transition from being a nursery to becoming a children's centre.

As soon as children join the nursery they start to make rapid progress in all areas of their development because of the outstanding teaching and support they receive. By the time they leave many are set to attain the expected levels for their age. The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding because staff have excellent knowledge and understanding of the personal and learning needs of young children. The staff are talented, approachable and very caring. This ensures that children make exceptional progress in their personal, social and emotional development and their general well-being, and are well equipped for their Reception classes. Parents have an increased understanding of their children's play and development because of an extremely successful parent partnership programme. The excellent use made of the centre's extended services contributes significantly to the outstanding care, guidance and support, and enhances children's well-being. The curriculum is excellent and provides constant pleasure, excitement and adventure. The one area to address in this otherwise extremely successful centre is to make sure that the outdoor area, which is currently under further development, is as exciting as the indoor classrooms.

The inspirational, extremely energetic and experienced headteacher together with her staff are constantly looking for ways to improve their work. They often pioneer new developments for other provisions to emulate. For instance, they have recently devised a highly effective way of tracking children's progress from birth to the end of nursery in light of the new Foundation Stage guidance. They happily share their expertise and skills with other local schools thus spreading effective early years practice. Excellent progress has been made since the last inspection, particularly in offering extended care and tracking children's progress. This track record, together with the centre's highly accurate understanding of its performance, is clear evidence of an outstanding capacity to build on the centre's many strengths. Governors provide excellent support to the centre and are increasingly involved in evaluating its work.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Make all aspects of the outdoor learning environment as exciting and stimulating as the indoor classrooms

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

From a low starting point on entry many children's attainment meets the expected levels for their age by the time they leave the nursery. They achieve exceptionally well and are very well

prepared for their Reception classes. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities make rapid progress because of sensitive, loving support and the exciting practical activities and resources that capture their interest. This is also true for the few children at an early stage of learning English. Although some children's speech and language skills are weaker than in other areas of their development, the nursery's clear focus on this aspect and staff and children's excellent use of sign language to augment communication ensure that all children progress exceptionally well. More able children's learning needs are also successfully met by carefully planned group work. Prior to starting at the nursery, many children now attend the recently established under-threes provision in the centre. Nursery staff can already see the extremely positive impact this provision is having on children's language and social skills.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Children often join the nursery appearing timid and lacking in confidence, but leave as exceptionally happy, confident and enthusiastic learners. Their self-esteem improves rapidly because all staff value them as individuals, respecting their ideas and listening carefully to their thoughts. They develop extremely positive attitudes to learning because it is made so practical and enjoyable. For example, they are eagerly awaiting the hatching of their hen's eggs, enthusiastically checking the eggs in the incubator for signs of cracks! Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Children are very friendly towards each other and mix well together, regardless of ethnicity or gender. They quickly become confident enough to work independently and rapidly learn to take turns and share resources. They remain busy throughout sessions, persevering with tasks and responding positively to encouragement and praise, which spurs them on to try even harder. Excellent relationships, friendships and behaviour ensure the nursery is a happy and busy place to be. Children enjoy eating healthy fruit snacks and happily help themselves to water from the vending machines. They have the chance to select their own lunch from a range of healthy options, which actively engages them in making healthy eating choices. They show a mature awareness of how to keep safe when they don goggles and expertly used hacksaws to construct wooden models. The skills children learn, together with the independence they develop, are preparing them extremely well for later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

The excellent teaching and learning are exciting, challenging and fun. Adults have high expectations of children which results in children being very attentive and responding quickly to instructions. Stimulating lessons with bright attractive resources contribute significantly to the excellent progress children make. Adults use questions well to encourage children to describe what they are doing or to recount ideas and experiences. Children who find oral communication difficult and those who are at an early stage of speaking English derive considerable benefit and success from their ability to use sign language to express their ideas. Teamwork is paramount as seen in the excellent and varied contribution made by the talented nursery nurses and teaching assistants.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The range of activities provided is outstanding. The nursery environment is a feast for the eyes with superb, colourful displays hanging from the ceilings and walls and high quality, tactile, enticing resources just waiting to be enjoyed. No wonder children achieve so well and settle so quickly in this stimulating centre. Many parents commented on how much they appreciated the bright, fresh, clean classrooms and the high quality displays. There is an excellent balance between child selected and adult led tasks and individual or group learning which successfully fosters children's personal and social development. Staff continually seek ways to enrich children's learning through exciting projects, with artists in residence and many visits and visitors. Parents happily and confidently permit their young children to enjoy a residential farm visit. The centre is currently correctly developing its outdoor provision further to ensure it provides as much excitement and interest as the indoor environment.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Parents are delighted with the outstanding care, guidance and support provided. One parent wrote, 'I am very happy that my son is in such safe hands.' Staff excel at supporting and encouraging all children and this particularly helps those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Excellent links with outside agencies mean that staff can quickly obtain resources and guidance when necessary. Staff make excellent use of the comprehensive assessment system to guide children on the next steps in their learning. They are vigilant in tracking children's progress and extremely knowledgeable about all aspects of child protection and safety issues. There are excellent opportunities for parents to be involved in family learning and parents' classes, such as one on learning how to use sign language, that provide invaluable links between home and school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher is a pivotal figure in all that the centre achieves. She has successfully and enthusiastically led the centre through numerous changes and developed excellent links with an extensive number of groups and organisations to provide the best possible Foundation Stage education for the children of Nechells. Parents feel extremely fortunate to have such high calibre leadership, which has made such a significant difference to the lives of very many children and their families. She is effectively supported by high quality senior leaders. Together they have succeeded in ensuring that the skills of the staff team have been carefully nurtured and extended to maintain continued school improvement. Senior leaders have excellent, extremely well organised systems to determine how well the centre and the children are doing. Supportive governors have a very good understanding of the centre's work and are increasingly confident at challenging senior leaders. The unbounded enthusiasm of everyone connected with the centre and its long track record of success demonstrate an excellent capacity for continuing improvement.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

8 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Bloomsbury Children's Centre, Birmingham, B7 5BX

I enjoyed my visit to your nursery very much. I really liked watching some of the exciting things you do. Your parents and carers think that you go to an excellent nursery and I agree with them.

There are lots of great things about your nursery.

- You are very good at working hard, helping each other and listening to your teachers, and you do extremely well in all your lessons.
- The staff care about you very much. They are excellent at teaching you and they make learning really interesting and fun, giving you many exciting things to do.
- Your headteacher and other staff are very clever at running the school and making sure you all have a good time and do really well.
- Anybody who needs extra help is always given it and you are all very good at using sign language.
- You love learning new things and are very good at sharing, taking turns, talking and being kind to each other.
- For all these reasons you make excellent progress.

Your headteacher and staff have lots of good ideas to make the nursery even better and I agree with them that it would be good to make sure your outdoor area is as exciting as your indoor classrooms. I am sure you will have lots of good ideas of what you would like to do with it.

It was good to see that you are all so happy at nursery and doing so well.

I wish you all the very best for the future and hope that all your eggs hatch out next week.

Joyce Cox Lead inspector