

# Hirst Wood Nursery School

Clarence Road, Shipley, West Yorkshire, BD18 4NJ

## 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 children		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of children		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and children

### This is a good school.

- Good teaching enables children to enjoy learning. Teaching makes sure that children are ready to take advantage of opportunities that are available when they move to primary school.
- High quality care and a safe and stimulating environment also encourage good learning and achievement.
- Children with disabilities and with special educational needs make excellent progress and are fully included in school life. They are very well supported by adults and are welcomed by all children.
- The school is a highly valued part of the local community. Parents are unanimous in recommending it to others and are full of praise for the difference it makes to their family lives.
- Children achieve well and most develop skills that exceed what is typical for their age. They make particularly good progress in aspects of their personal development, in developing a love of books and in the joy of expressing their creativity.
- Outdoor learning successfully enhances all areas of children's development including their understanding of the world.
- Procedures for safeguarding children and securing their health and safety are very thorough.
- A strong senior leadership team has created a positive ethos that has secured continuous improvement in achievement and teaching. Staff are keen to hone their skills and increasingly seek to collaborate with other schools.
- Strong governance and astute management of resources has also enabled the school to move forward.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most able children are not consistently challenged, especially in tasks that encourage these children to quickly develop their writing and mathematics.
- Assessments of children's achievement are not focused enough on checking the progress of different groups of children, in particular the most able.
- Parents' understanding of how well their child is learning is reduced because they have limited scope to participate in the process of creating their child's learning journey.
- There is a lack of precision in the school's evaluation of its own performance and in the targets related to raising achievement in the school improvement plan.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed each of the three classes. On three of the visits the inspector was joined by the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the staff team and six governors. A meeting was conducted with the school's Business Manager and a meeting was held with a family support worker. In addition, there was a conversation with the special educational needs coordinator who leads and manages the local authority resource base provision for children with disabilities and special educational needs. A meeting was also held with the early years coordinator from a local primary school. The inspector also talked with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's view of how well it is doing, its plans for improvement; information on children's progress and attainment; school policies; records relating to safeguarding and behaviour and teachers' planning of learning. Samples of children's work were scrutinised from their 'learning journeys' and information sent to parents about their children's achievements was also considered.
- The views of staff were established by evaluating their responses in 14 completed inspection questionnaires, as well as talking with staff throughout the inspection.
- The opinions of parents were ascertained by evaluating 29 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. The inspector also chatted with over twenty parents as they brought their children to school and held an open meeting with around a dozen parents at the start of the second day. In addition meetings were held with individual parents.

## Inspection team

David Byrne, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized nursery school. It provides part-time nursery education for up to 144 children.
- Children enter the school in the term after their third birthday. Children join the school at three points each year, at the start of each term dependent on when they have their third birthday. During the time of the inspection, 84 children were attending.
- The large majority of children are of White British backgrounds. An average proportion is from minority ethnic backgrounds including from of Asian and Eastern European backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs supported through a statement of special educational need is above average.
- The school manages provision for up to eight full time equivalent children with severe learning difficulties who have a statement of special educational needs. This is separately funded by the local authority and was inspected as part of this inspection.
- In recent months there has been some unavoidable staff absence due to illness. During the inspection, there were two temporary teachers.
- The school is integrated with the Hirst Wood Children's centre with which it shares some staff and accommodation. The Children's Centre is inspected separately from the nursery school. The report is available on the Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

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

- Improve teaching and aspects of leadership and management thereby raising achievement from good to outstanding by:
  - refining the quality and use of assessments so that the progress of different groups of children, in particular the most able, is rigorously checked
  - using assessment more effectively to inform planning so that the most able children are consistently challenged to make more rapid progress in writing and mathematics
  - enhancing parents' abilities to understand and support their child's progress by making more use of learning journeys
  - refining the school's self-evaluation record so that judgements are more exact and are more sharply focused on children's achievement and using that information to develop precise targets in the school improvement plan.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- An effective leadership team and dedicated governing body, ensures that children get a good start to their education. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors are ambitious for the school and the achievement of the children. Together they have established a culture where good teaching is promoted well and good behaviour is always encouraged.
- The school is very well organised and the procedures for safeguarding children and adults are very thorough. The school is totally committed to meeting the needs of all children and to removing inequalities.
- Staff are unanimous in their backing of the school. They have clear roles, for example, in leading on areas of learning such as expressive art and design. They contribute well to middle leadership and in this way offer a good model for improving the school further. The impact on learning of unavoidable staff changes has been minimised because all staff in the school share the same view about how young children learn.
- The clear direction provided by school leaders is not fully reflected in its self-evaluation record and the plans for improving the school. The school's targets are not precise enough to secure improvements that are necessary to move the school towards outstanding.
- The performance of teaching staff is carefully tracked and each teacher negotiates targets for their professional development. The headteacher is keen that all staff continuously develop their skills. Staff attend training and are increasingly working with other nursery schools in order to further develop their teaching.
- The needs of children with disabilities and special educational needs, whose places are funded by the local authority, are extremely well led and managed. The school ensures that these children are always fully included in school life.
- Parents are extremely positive about the contribution the school makes to their children's education and to their family life. Many applaud the way the school offers flexibility about when children attend the school. They say that this helps them to plan their work life. Comments given to the inspector include: 'This is marvellous place' and 'Just brilliant' and 'My child even wants to come at weekends' typify the overwhelming views of the parents.
- Good communication with families, including using social media, texting and frequent newsletters keeps everyone up to date with events in the school. However, there are too few opportunities for parents to participate in contributing to their child's learning journeys and so further develop their understanding of their child's achievement in relation to the early years curriculum.
- The learning activities that are provided for children ensure that they are engrossed in their learning from the moment they arrive each day. The weekly nursery rhyme and book strengthens their understanding of spoken and written English. The many opportunities that are provided outdoors successfully promote children's learning in all aspects of their development, including physical and creative development and their understanding of the world. The curriculum is further enhanced by visits from artists, authors and musicians. Children develop an awareness of green issues by planting and harvesting vegetables outside.
- Children make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Different cultures are valued, for example, by celebrating Chinese New Year. British values such as tolerance, respect, equality and why rules are important are promoted. As a result, children play happily together, share toys and equipment, and look after one another.
- The local authority has correctly identified that the school needs little support. It provides access to training for staff and keeps governors up to date with changing legislation.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are passionate about the school. They have a good range of skills that they use to support as well challenge, senior leaders effectively. They understand the school because they visit the school regularly to talk to staff and watch children learn, and use data to evaluate children's performance. They listen to the views of parents which add to their good understanding of the school. Governors have a well-established system for setting performance targets for the headteacher and checking on the progress towards these. Procedures are in place to ensure that teachers' pay and promotion are tied to the effectiveness of their teaching. Governors have very good knowledge of the school's finances and secure a healthy budget.

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

- The behaviour of children is outstanding. When they are learning, children have lots of smiles and display enjoyment in their learning. They show advanced levels of concentration for their age and persevere with tasks to complete them. One child was so proud when he built his own tower that was as high as he was. He excitedly reported that it was getting 'wibbly wobbly' as it got taller.
- The staff value each child as an individual. The views of children are respected and children gain the confidence to make decisions for themselves. Their self-confidence and sense of well-being grows and grows as a result.
- Children with social, emotional, behavioural or special educational needs are expertly supported. Dedicated and highly skilled staff ensure that the most vulnerable children in receipt of a statement of special educational needs take a full part in all the nursery has to offer. Space, resources and activities are designed to ensure that the needs of all children are fully met.
- The Children's Centre team have a significant impact on the wellbeing and behaviour of vulnerable children. The help and advice provided enables families to support their child in coming to school regularly. The high levels of enjoyment evident amongst all children for school, is one reason why a very large majority attend regularly.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is outstanding. Children are very well cared for, they feel safe and secure. Parents are very complimentary indeed about how well their children are cared for and say there are no concerns at all about their care or safety.
- The procedures for ensuring children are free from all reasonable risk are excellent. Detailed assessments of risk are performed and recorded, and action is swift to remove any risk that emerges. The safety of children at work and play is paramount. If an accident occurs, details are recorded precisely and innovative ideas such as giving a child a wrist band informing parents that they have banged their head make sure families are fully in the picture.
- Children are guided to understand how to stay safe and look after their health. Before snack time and lunch in school, children are encouraged to wash their hands. After playing and learning outdoors, children know the importance of hygiene by keeping their hands clean.
- Outdoors, children are encouraged to test their physical skills, for example by scaling the climbing frame or by cycling up the hill on their tricycles. Because staff are always vigilante, risk is measured and children develop the self-confidence to act safely.

**The quality of teaching****is good**

- From the moment the children arrive at school, their learning begins. They cannot wait to get going and explore the room and its exciting array of activities. Some children were fascinated by the 'jungle arrangement' in which they were wildlife explorers, using hand lenses to locate jungle animals hiding in the leaves and twigs. At another time, children were engrossed with getting messy as they scooped out the filling of a pumpkin in readiness for Halloween. Children are supported and guided so that they can get the best out of each activity.
- Each room has a role play area in which children are enabled to use their imaginations by acting out events from stories, or to play imaginatively in other ways. A link with the popular children's film, 'Frozen' has inspired some children to take on characters of the film by dressing, for example, as princesses. Children willingly play in the home corner copying the behaviour of the adults in their real and imaginary lives. Many children are relatively articulate and intervention by adults when they play lifts their skills of speaking and enhances their conversation.
- Although children are enabled to access books and have a go at writing the focus on early writing is not quite as robust as the focus on expressive and creative work. For example, some of the most able children miss out because the writing activities are not challenging enough and they do not always get the chance to fully develop their learning.
- In mathematics, there is an assortment of activities linked to mathematics enabling children, for example, to count and recognise numbers. Children are challenged to talk about the relative sizes of their constructions. Occasionally children can apply their skills and solve simple problems but activities that

make them think hard are not frequent enough to stretch the most able children.

- Children benefit from having the options to work together inside and outdoors. They make good progress in sharing and working with others, and are enabled to listen and talk. The books of the week, the weekly rhyme, and times when children listen to a story develop and extend their understanding of literature and its different uses.
- Outdoors, staff have crafted a good range of learning activities that develop children's physical skills. The space is also exploited to widen their understanding of counting, number and sometimes to promote early writing skills. Children challenge themselves climbing and cycling. The mud kitchen enables children to explore the natural materials available and complements their experiences growing and harvesting vegetables in the school garden.
- Adults regularly meet to review the progress of each child. The school is in the process of refining the data so it gives a clearer picture of children's individual progress, as well as the progress of different groups including the most able. Currently assessment data is not always used as effectively as it might be to make sure that activities consistently meet the needs of the most able children.
- The school is in the process of working with practitioners from within the local Nursery school network to make sure its assessments are as accurate as they can be.

### **The achievement of children** is good

- Observations during the inspection and analysis of the nursery's performance data show that children make at least good progress.
- Many children enter the Nursery with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. The very large majority of children make good progress in all areas of their learning and development and are well prepared for starting primary school. Most leave nursery with skills higher than those that are typical for their ages.
- Children make outstanding progress in their personal, social and emotional development due to the care shown for individuals, and the opportunities provided for children to work together, make choices, follow their interests and talk about their feelings.
- Children develop very good listening skills and confidently talk together and with adults. Most develop a love of books through their exposure to the book of the week and they also start to recognise the sounds that letters make. Some children are ready to write simple letters and to explore the way letters create simple words.
- Most children make good progress in early mathematics because of the practical learning activities available for them inside and outdoors. Their mathematical development is promoted well through play that develops their understanding of number, shape and space.
- The most able children do not do as well as they could in developing their early writing skills, through for example mark making and are not consistently stretched in aspects of mathematical development.
- Children's information-finding and communication skills are suitably developed because they are encouraged to use electronic games and use computers when appropriate.
- Children with disabilities and special educational needs, who are funded by the local authority, make rapid and sustained progress from their starting points. This is because of the support provided by a very skilled staff who know exactly what each child needs.

## 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	107186
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	447933

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 children	3–4
Gender of children	Mixed
Number of children on the school roll	144
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Outlaw
Headteacher	Christine Martin
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2012
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