

Chichester Nursery School

St James Road, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 7AB

Inspection dates 3–4 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, other leaders and governors have high ambition for what children can achieve. They inspire the whole staff team and ensure that the children learn successfully and achieve well from consistently good teaching.
- Teamwork is very good and ensures that the children learn as they play in a safe and secure space.
- Governors' monitoring of the work of the school is good and they know the school well. They ask searching questions and hold staff accountable for the children's achievement.
- Partnerships with parents are excellent, resulting in children's smooth transition from home to school.
- Teachers skilfully plan children's learning and development so their needs and interests are met. Learning in the classroom and outside is well planned and managed and, consequently, children achieve well.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs are well supported by knowledgeable staff, who ensure their full involvement in all activities.
- Children behave well in response to the high expectations and warm, positive approach of the staff. Staff have excellent relationships with the children and successfully promote respect and consideration for others.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The progress made by boys is sometimes not as rapid as that of girls.
- Children's learning is less strong in their understanding of the world than in other areas of learning.
- Teachers do not always fully challenge the most-able children with the result that their progress slows.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven sessions or part-sessions.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, the leadership team, other staff and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the Nursery's information on children's current progress; planning and checks on the quality of teaching; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector took account of the 44 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), an email from a parent and spoke to several parents when they brought their children to Nursery.
- The returns made by 35 staff to a questionnaire were considered.

Inspection team

Richard Blackmore, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is part of Chichester Nursery School Children and Family Centre. The Nursery is divided into 'Up to 3s' (for children from six months to three-years-old) and the main Nursery for children over three years of age.
- The school and centre are under the leadership of the headteacher.
- The school is a large pre-school setting, but of average size compared with other maintained nursery schools.
- The main Nursery school is divided into groups where children attend part time.
- Most children are White British.
- Around 30% of the children are identified as disabled or with special educational needs. This is an above-average proportion.
- Since the last inspection, there have been staff changes in leadership, including the appointment of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. There have also been changes in teaching and nursery assistant staff.
- The school offers a breakfast club and after-school provision, which are managed by the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve children's achievement by ensuring that teaching provides:
 - tasks that motivate and sustain boys' concentration so that they make faster progress
 - more activities that focus specifically on developing children's understanding of the world
 - greater challenge for the most-able children.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a very good understanding of early years provision and practice, and manages staff changes well. She communicates a culture of improvement that all leaders, staff and governors share to improve further the currently good quality of teaching and children's behaviour. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. It uses a wide range of information to judge current performance and identifies the correct priorities for further improvement. Consequently, the school works with a sense of purpose to improve.
- Middle leaders have established a positive climate of expectations of what children can achieve within each area of learning, which enables the children to learn successfully. These leaders diligently contribute to the promotion of equality of opportunity and tackle any discrimination so that all groups of children flourish socially and academically. Middle leaders are good role models and foster very good relationships across the school community. As a result, all staff are fully involved in the children's education.
- Good-quality training in all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage has produced an effective team of staff and governors. For example, staff commitment to ensuring their best professional practice prompts them to share their most effective practice with each other.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching thoroughly and follow up any weaknesses. As a result, teaching is typically good and, occasionally, outstanding. Teachers' individual targets are aimed at improving their practice and decisions made about increases in their salaries are linked carefully to children's progress.
- The curriculum inspires interest in learning and interweaves many opportunities to enhance children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and other skills. 'It's perfect,' is how one parent described the school's provision, and children are regularly consulted about what they would like to learn. However, children's understanding of the world (which is the area of the curriculum where children get to know about other people, the place where they live and about all aspects of the environment) is less secure than other areas, although leaders are already addressing this weaker area.
- The learning opportunities provided give children a good understanding of the principles behind British values, such as understanding the importance of listening and respecting others' views and opinions. As a result, they gain an early appreciation of the responsibilities of life in modern British society.
- The governing body and the school staff make sure that safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously to meet statutory requirements. Consequently, children are well cared for in the Nursery and in the before- and after-school provision.
- Good links exist with parents, who value highly the support and guidance they receive. Staff regularly share children's 'learning portfolios' with parents so that the children's achievements at school and at home can be celebrated. Strong links with outside agencies, such as speech therapists, health visitors and social workers, support families and individuals effectively.
- The local authority provides regular and effective support through regular visits focused on teaching and leadership and management. It is effective in supporting better teaching and learning.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are effective because they are knowledgeable about the school's work and provide a high level of challenge and support to the headteacher in ensuring that effective provision is sustained. They know what the strengths in teaching are and where it needs to improve. They are fully aware that children achieve well in nearly all areas of learning. This is because they have a good understanding of the information relating to children's attainment on entry and the levels children generally reach on exit from the Nursery. They ensure that performance management and teachers' pay rewards are clearly linked to children's good, rather than expected, progress. They track the progress of all groups of children and are determined to raise achievement further. Governors carefully monitor the use of all finances to ensure that funds are spent to ensure the development of children's knowledge, understanding and skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of children is good. This is the case in the Nursery school and the breakfast club and after-school provision. School records, views expressed in the online parental questionnaire and informal discussions with parents confirm this view. No child has been excluded from the school because of poor

behaviour.

- Children respect staff and are sensitive to the needs of other children. They observe and follow the simple but effective rules of the Nursery that are woven into the routines and activities. Children appreciate the importance of following the rules so that everyone remains safe and happy.
- Staff provide a warm, nurturing environment and ensure that the children behave well. Children quickly become familiar with the Nursery routines and settle in well. As a result, there is a calm atmosphere in the Nursery and children listen and respond well to instructions.
- Children get on well with each other. Simple disagreements are sorted out quickly and therefore do not interfere with children's learning. They share equipment and toys very well and have mature attitudes to taking turns. This reflects the impact of good provision for the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Safety

- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is good. Children feel safe and are right to do so. Parents who expressed a view were confident that their children were safe at school.
- The children's well-being is given the highest priority at all times. The excellent outdoor area provides an impressive range of challenging activities for climbing, balancing and crawling, but safety is always the highest priority when children undertake these activities. Children judge risk confidently when they are tackling these challenges.
- Staff keep detailed risk assessments for the indoor and outdoor area and for when adults take children out in the local area.
- Although attendance is not statutory for children of this age, staff work effectively with parents so that children attend regularly and are punctual at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- The site is safe and secure. Staff are well qualified and there is a good level of supervision both inside the classrooms and outside. There are rigorous checks on the staff prior to their appointment.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Staff establish excellent relationships with children and parents. Consequently, children and parents feel valued, and children learn well and thrive in the happy, purposeful environment.
- Staff usually expect a lot of the children. They aim directly to raise all children's attainment and ensure all make at least good progress and achieve well. Children respond with enthusiasm and are keen and eager to do well. This also applies in the 'Up to 3s' part of the Nursery. At a very early stage, children learn successfully and are usually enthusiastic contributors to all learning activities.
- Activities are very carefully linked so that children are constantly learning through many opportunities to play and explore. Their thinking and creativity are carefully fostered as they find new ways of doing things in the exciting surroundings. For example, children made musical instruments and developed their vocabulary at the same time, correctly using words such as 'loud', 'quiet' and 'soft'.
- Children in the 'Up to 3s' and main Nursery make good use of the large outside areas where staff take turns in the many zones, such as the sandpit, supporting the children's learning and enjoyment of school. Staff carefully assess the children's growing levels of skill, accurately recording what they say, and make sure that activities almost always fully challenge each child.
- The teaching of early reading and literacy is good and, consequently, children make good progress in developing these skills. Children have good opportunities to develop an understanding of letters and sounds during regular activities which are made challenging for all abilities. Children were keen to show adults how their writing skills are developing. For example, a few children confidently wrote and read their names and simple words.
- Children are given good opportunities to develop their literacy skills through making marks and learning to control paintbrushes, pencils and pens. They listen to stories and join in writing activities with enthusiasm. Teachers make good use of opportunities to encourage children to develop their recognition of letters. However, boys sometimes make slower progress than girls because they occasionally lose interest and their progress slows.
- The needs of disabled children and those who have special educational needs are quickly identified. Well-targeted support ensures they make consistently good progress as a result of skilful teaching.
- The teaching of numeracy skills is closely planned into the wide variety of learning activities. For example, children are encouraged to tell the story of their play using numbers and shapes, and achieve well in these

skills.

- The teaching of the most-able children is typically effective and teachers are becoming increasingly skilled at providing challenging activities for these children. Teachers assess the children's understanding from effective questioning and the children's response, so that work is constantly challenging. However, occasionally, teaching does not take full account of what children already know and results in the level of challenge sometimes being too easy for the most able.
- Children do not have enough opportunities to deepen their understanding of the world in sufficient detail. Consequently, they do not make as rapid progress in this area of learning as they do in other areas of the curriculum.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start Nursery with skills that vary, but which for most children are below those typical for their age group – with particularly lower literacy skills. Children make good progress and generally attain most of the early learning goals expected for a successful start to their next stage of education.
- Any differences in the rate of progress between different groups of children are usually rapidly identified because the school makes good use of data about individual children and groups to check on the impact of teaching. Staff then usually make the necessary changes to planned activities to ensure that no individuals or groups fall behind. However, boys do not always make as fast progress as girls.
- Children's progress in reading is good. They enjoy working with adults in small groups to learn and practise phonics (letters and the sounds they make) to help them to read simple words. These skills are reinforced by the use of the interesting range of books and the many labels and questions around the indoor and the outdoor learning areas.
- Children learn well as they play inside and out. They greatly enjoy developing their own list of tasks in the 'building office' in an area outside. Children organise themselves and take turns to be in charge and organise what 'jobs' need to be done.
- The progress of disabled children and those who have special educational needs is good because the school is very quick to identify their individual learning needs and give them appropriate support.
- Opportunities for mark-making and writing are an important and well-planned part of the indoor and outdoor environments. Most children make good progress in early writing skills as they make signs in the outside area, write lists and happily attempt to write their names.
- Parents and carers are right to be pleased with the progress their children are making and how much their children enjoy learning.
- The most-able children usually make good progress because teachers and teaching assistants generally have high expectations of what they can achieve and plan interesting and varied activities. However, they are not always fully challenged and, occasionally, their progress slows.

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	125808
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	449534

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	0–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	127
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Harmer-Draper
Headteacher	Jenny Buckley
Date of previous school inspection	16 November 2011
Telephone number	01243 782540
Fax number	01243 782540
Email address	office@chichester-nur.w-sussex.sch.uk

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