

St Paul's Nursery School and Children's Centre

Inspection report

Unique reference number	108901
Local authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	377845
Inspection dates	30 April – 1 May 2012
Lead inspector	David Curtis

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	0–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	105
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pru Willmott
Headteacher	Lucy Driver
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2009
School address	Little Bishop Street St Paul's Bristol BS2 9JF
Telephone number	0117 9030337
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Registered childcare provision	St Paul's Nursery School and Children's Centre
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	76
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	21 January 2009

Age group	0–4
Inspection date(s)	30 April – 1 May 2012
Inspection number	377845



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Introduction

Inspection team

David Curtis

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector spent a total of seven hours observing children working with their key persons and on activities they chose themselves. He held meetings with members of the senior leadership team, the bilingual support staff, 10 members of the governing body, and parents and carers. The inspector took account of the responses to the online Parent View survey in planning the inspection. He observed the school's work, and looked at data showing children's progress and policies relating to child protection, safeguarding and welfare requirements, including the statutory legal requirements for children in the registered childcare provision. The inspector looked at 81 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, together with others completed by staff.

Information about the school

This is an average-size nursery school. Most children come from minority ethnic heritages, which include Somali, African-Caribbean and Asian. The proportion of children with English as an additional language is high. The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs is above average. The proportions of children supported at school action plus and children with a statement of special educational need is below average. The governing body manages childcare provision for nought to three-year-olds. The children's centre was inspected on 1 – 2 May and is subject to a separate inspection report.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. Children thrive in an exciting learning environment where the richness of the cultural diversity of families is celebrated, with the result that the school is an inclusive and harmonious community. Parents and carers are fulsome in their praise for the school. As one wrote, 'Children feel safe and loved and the centre is an extension of their family to them.'
- Children make excellent progress in all areas of learning. Outstanding achievement in communication, language and literacy, and in problem solving, reasoning, and numeracy is the result of high-quality teaching of these vital key skills. Children show impressive confidence and maturity when planning their own learning.
- Key persons plan children's learning exceptionally well, by basing it around the children's interests and enthusiasm. High-quality 'learning stories' enable children and their parents and carers to contribute to excellent and detailed planning. Bilingual support staff make an exceptional contribution to children's learning, especially those with English as an additional language.
- Behaviour is exemplary. Children play together happily in a safe, secure, and welcoming environment and demonstrate an infectious enthusiasm for learning. All parents and carers who completed the inspection questionnaire agree that the school keeps their children safe.
- Outstanding leadership and management contribute significantly to the sustained high levels of achievement for children. Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate. There are significant strengths in the monitoring of teaching and learning and in the management of staff performance. While there are significant strengths in the assessment of children's learning, senior leaders recognise the need to engage parents and carers more in the process. Provision for children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is outstanding.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on and extend the procedures for the tracking of individual children's progress in order to engage parents and carers even better as partners in their children's learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children start the Nursery with skills levels that are at well below expected levels. A very high proportion of children are new to learning English. As the result of outstanding progress for all groups, especially for those learning English as an additional language, children start the Reception classes in primary schools with skills levels that are expected for their age. Progress is equally good for disabled children and those with special educational needs. Inspection findings support fully parents' and carers' views that their children make outstanding progress. Children show impressive levels of concentration, for example in listening to stories or taking part in 'circle time', where children sit in a circle and have excellent opportunities to share their thoughts and feelings. They listen attentively and are very enthusiastic and keen to contribute their thoughts and feelings. Stories excite and motivate children so that, for example, after hearing the story of How Billy Duck Learned to Swim, a group of boys, spontaneously, retold the story among themselves, using the props that the teacher had used.

Children are very confident in speaking and listening, especially in sharing their feelings and using words, including 'frightened', 'scared' and 'afraid'. Children enjoy finding words with the same initial letter sound as in their name and develop very good early writing skills when they make 'appointments' or 'take telephone messages'. They count confidently from one to 10, with more-able children reading numbers accurately to 20. Most children recognise 'square', 'rectangle', 'triangle' and 'circle', and enjoy using shapes to make repeating patterns. In one session, children made excellent progress in counting and recording numbers when they played a game of skittles. All groups make outstanding progress, as confirmed by inspection findings and the school's excellent tracking of children's progress by gender, ability, and ethnicity.

Quality of teaching

Inspection evidence indicates that teaching is outstanding, a view fully supported by parents and carers. Staff have an outstanding understanding of the needs of young children and how to implement the very best practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Planning is exceptional because it is centred on children's interests

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and produced through high-quality 'learning stories' which map out the activities children will follow to maximise achievement and develop their communication skills in an accelerated manner. During the inspection, for example, a child's interest in pirates was extended to building a pirate ship, making a 'treasure map and then searching for the treasure. Other children joined in spontaneously, with the result that, at one point, the outdoor area was overrun with 'pirates'.

Key persons work very effectively, with the high-quality support from the bilingual team making an outstanding impact on the excellent progress made by children with English as an additional language. For example, in story sessions, bilingual staff will translate the story into Somali and Punjabi so that all children have full access to learning. Similarly, in 'circle time', bilingual staff encourage children to share their feelings in their home language. A significant strength is that children whose first language is English are enthusiastic in learning words and how to count to 10 in both Somali and Punjabi. They show no inhibitions and, for them, it is a natural part of learning. 'Circle time' is used most effectively to promote children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, for example in a session where they explore feelings relating to being angry. Equally effective is the teaching for disabled children and those with special educational needs, where excellent identification of needs and high-quality support ensure they make rapid gains in their learning.

Staff use assessment very successfully to monitor and track children's progress through high-quality 'learning diaries'. The diaries contain detailed, annotated notes, together with photographs of children's progress in all six areas of learning. 'Learning diaries' give staff, children, and their parents and carers an excellent picture of the children's exciting journey through the Nursery. However, staff have recognised the need to ensure that all parents and carers are fully engaged in contributing to their child's 'learning diary'.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour in school is outstanding and children show a genuine thirst for learning. They show high levels of concentration and perseverance and spend much of their time actively engaged in a wide range of stimulating activities. Children are extremely courteous and polite to staff and each other and demonstrate great maturity in their levels of self-discipline. Children are extremely happy in school and thrive socially as well as academically in the exciting and vibrant learning environment. Children feel very safe and secure and know that there is always an adult to turn to if they have any worries or concerns whatsoever. There is no evidence to suggest bullying of any kind. Parents and carers agree that behaviour and their children's safety in the school are excellent. Children have excellent relationships with one another and with their key person. Boys and girls, and children from the diverse ethnic heritages represented in the school play together happily and in harmony. They show a genuine sense of fairness and are always ready to take turns as, for example, demonstrated when some children waited patiently to use sand timers.

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Leadership and management

The headteacher and senior leaders have an excellent understanding of how young children learn and, importantly, how this relates to the needs of children and their families within an ethnically diverse community. Consequently, children's high achievement is sustained over time. Senior leaders monitor children's performance and the quality of teaching exceptionally well. Many opportunities are provided for staff to participate in professional development activities that make a telling contribution to the quality of teaching and learning in the school. There is a significant strength in the way children's progress is monitored and assessed by key groups, especially by gender, ability, and ethnicity. Staff have a detailed understanding of the performance of each child and, following regular reviews, set children new targets, which are shared with parents and carers. The governing body provides high-quality support and challenge to the senior leadership team. Along with other school leaders, it is rigorous in ensuring that the safety and welfare of children are paramount in its work and that all safeguarding requirements are met fully.

Staff and school leaders promote the curriculum very effectively, which results in children enjoying a wide range of stimulating activities across all six areas of learning. There is an excellent balance of activities led by adults and activities chosen by children. Children are confident in moving freely within the indoor learning spaces and those outdoors. The curriculum is very effective in promoting children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.

The school ensures equality of opportunity for all, including that of families. The bilingual support staff play a critical role in this. They ensured, for example, that the Ofsted questionnaire was made available to parents and carers in their first language and emphasised the importance of them completing questionnaires to give their views on the school. Discrimination in any form is not tolerated by staff or school leaders and managers. The school's continuing strengths and outstanding performance have been recognised nationally, in that it will take part in a national pilot project funded by the Department for Education on 'Improving Outcomes for Children, Young People and Families', together with three other nursery schools in the local authority.

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The Early Years Foundation Stage delivered in the registered childcare provision

- The school meets the conditions of registration with Ofsted.
- Children make outstanding progress in their learning, especially in their personal, social, and emotional development. Children learn successfully how to share and take turns. They show a genuine enjoyment of stories.
- Staff have an excellent understanding of the needs of children under three years of age, including babies. Planning linked to 'learning stories' is of the same high quality as that in the main Nursery.
- Children benefit enormously from high-quality resources and learning spaces, including their own secure outdoor area. Children have formed excellent bonds with their key person.
- Parents and carers are fulsome in their praise for the high-quality care their children receive.
- As in the main Nursery, staff keep detailed records of children's progress through 'learning diaries'. There is excellent monitoring of teaching and learning and its impact on outcomes for children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage of the registered childcare provision, inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage for the registered provision	1

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



2 May 2012

Dear Children

**Inspection of St Paul's Nursery School and Children's Centre, Bristol BS2
9JF**

Thank you very much for making me feel very welcome in your school. I enjoyed watching you learn, both with your key person and on your own. I am pleased to tell you that you go to an outstanding school. These are some of the areas in which the school is very successful.

- You make excellent progress in your learning.
- You get on very well with one another; I enjoyed seeing all those 'pirates' searching for 'treasure'.
- I liked the way in which you plan your own learning; I thought that it was brilliant.
- You enjoy learning with your key person and you listen very well.
- You enjoy all the opportunities you have to learn on your own, both indoors and in your lovely outdoor area, including in the pouring rain.
- Teaching is outstanding and your key persons have very high expectations that you should enjoy learning – which you do!
- Senior leaders and the governing body are most successful in giving you the very best start to your education.

There is one thing that I have asked your headteacher and key persons to do. This is to look at ways in which your parents and carers can make contributions to your 'learning diary' to help paint an even better picture of the progress and journey you make during your time at school.

I know you will continue to enjoy every day at Nursery. It was lovely meeting you all.

Yours sincerely

David Curtis
Additional inspector

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