



Birmingham Federation Maintained Nursery Schools

*Allens Croft Nursery School
Jakeman Nursery School
Shenley Fields Nursery School*

*Lillian De Lissa Nursery School
Newtown Nursery School
St Thomas Nursery School*

*Adderley Nursery School
Gracelands Nursery School
Highfield Nursery School*

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Head Teachers: Sally Appadu, Stuart Brown, Nikki Hinchliffe

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2024 Governing Board Annual Report – Celebrating Our Schools



As another school year draws to an end I would like to take a moment to reflect on all that has been achieved and the fantastic work that has taken place across our nine nursery schools. We strive to offer a high quality early years experience for all our children to ensure they are successful learners and achieve to their full potential. There are many ways to define 'quality' and different people will measure different things to help them judge not only what is good but more importantly what is right

for the child and their family. Ofsted offers one important way we can measure quality and we are very proud of how Ofsted have judged our schools in recent visits. We know however that an Ofsted grade is only a snapshot of what we do, and we place great importance on continually reviewing what we do and how we do it. We value parent feedback and we encourage staff to listen and tune in to children to make sure that every individual child gets the support and opportunities they need to flourish and thrive. We are incredibly proud of how our nurseries have ensured that, despite the various challenges that we have all experienced these past few years, children experience joy, love and trust in their daily nursery encounters and experiences.

As a Governing Board it is our role to strategically lead our schools and we have responsibility for educational outcomes and financial sustainability. We are all volunteers but it is a highly rewarding role and the highlight is the opportunity to see our wonderful schools in action during visits. We have therefore decided this year to use this annual report to showcase what each school is most proud of this year. For some it is their Outstanding Ofsted outcomes, for others it the development of new areas and outdoor spaces to support children's needs and foster

curiosity and creativity. Community stay and play sessions and parent workshops are other examples of how our schools are reaching out and supporting children's wellbeing. Please read on in this report to read about these wonderful achievements and to see some fantastic images of this enriching, exciting, nurturing, stimulating learning in action.

On behalf of the Board of Governors I would like to say that we are, as ever, indebted and extremely grateful to all staff and school leaders who have worked tirelessly this year to help deliver all these proud moments and more.

I wish you all a wonderful summer break and if your child is moving on to primary school in September we wish them every success and hope you take away fond and happy memories of their time with us.

Kind regards,

Sean Delaney

Chair of Governors

Adderley Nursery School - Into the Woods Project



Adderley is blessed with an amazing outside area which includes a wonderful forest area, our children can experience, in the words of Friedrich Froebel, nature's "rich potential for imaginative, creative and symbolic play and a stimulating context for music song and dance."

We wanted to extend this to include parents, so we set up workshops in the woods to allow parents and children to learn and explore together. Staff modelled how we can use nature and all our senses to develop skills, learn new vocabulary, self-regulate, improve wellbeing, connect to the world around us and have a sense of belonging.

As the sessions progressed, we saw high levels of engagement and interactions between parents and children as the parents slowed down, relaxed, and responded to the children and just enjoyed spending time with their children in nature. Parents said they had used what they'd learnt in their own gardens and when visiting the park, they'd had fun, they'd enjoyed being in the forest themselves and being with their children, their friends, and the other parents. They would like to do it again!



Allens Croft Nursery School & Resource Base – Attention Autism



At Allens Croft Nursery School and Resources Base we are incredibly proud of the development of Attention Autism across our school. Our SENCO and our Inclusion lead were initially trained as part of the Attention Birmingham Project through the Developing Local Provision Programme. Our SENDCo was then selected to go on to train as an Advanced Practitioner.

Attention Autism was developed by Gina Davis who is a Speech and Language Therapist. She recognised that children with social communication and interaction difference needed a different approach to learning and it was developed (and continues to develop) based on what is known about how autistic people learn. It aims to develop attention and focus and always offers “an irresistible invitation to learn” as part of a shared experience with peers.

We use this programme to support all children who would benefit from increased attention skills. We also run groups within the nursery that all children can choose to attend, as we know all children benefit from modelling and demonstrating, using visuals, repetition and predictability. We are over a year into our Attention Autism journey and it is now a core part of our curriculum. It is having a huge impact on the development of our children. Not only have the groups impacted on the development of skills and vocabulary within the discreet sessions, but the approach as a whole has enabled us to further develop good practice across the school; approaches that work for all children.



Gracelands Nursery School – New Sensory Room



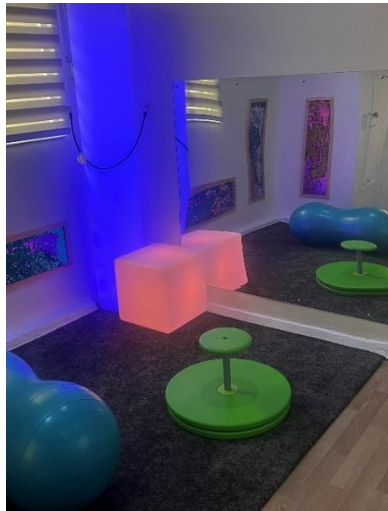
All at Gracelands Nursery School are very proud of the new sensory room that we have developed this year. When children walk into the room, their faces light up with awe, wonder and excitement!

The room has been designed, with input from external professionals and our SEND link governor, to cater for a range of sensory needs, and to create a space to nurture children's natural curiosity. It provides a safe, calm space for children to relax and regulate their emotions.

The children have opportunities to use all their senses, helping them develop different responses with their bodies. The large mirrors help children to look at reflections and learn how objects look from different angles. Light sources such as light tubes, fibre optics, infinity mirror and the dark den provide the means for children to learn through an interactive, sensory experience. Physical resources such as the peanut ball and whizzy-dizzy support children with their proprioception and vestibular sensory needs.

It is an inclusive space and a wonderful resource for developing early learning skills such as cause and effect, sequencing, colour work and turn-taking. It is well-suited for helping develop children's cognitive, questioning and thinking skills.

Since its completion in February, our sensory room has had an impact on all our children (and staff!) by giving them an opportunity to thrive using all of their body parts and senses.



Highfield Nursery School – Enhancing provision

The school has this year built on the success of its ungraded (Section 8) Ofsted inspection on 7 & 8 November 2023:

“Relationships are encouraging, supportive and ambitious for children. An exciting and well considered environment enriches early learning experiences. The provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is exemplary. Staff are well trained and incredibly skilled in child development. Children are happy and thrive on the care and support they receive. This is a very positive and inspirational community.”



The school has developed an enhanced/nurture provision unit in the mornings with staff:child ratios of 1:2 and 1:3 to meet the needs of children with complex special educational needs.

In April 2024, the LA agreed to an increase in pupil numbers attending our second site from 20 FTE to 36 FTE at Dyson Gardens. The school has increased the size of the staff team. The Dyson Gardens site has been developed to include improved outside continuous provision with new sheds providing additional covered areas and the maintained grounds enabling nature play. Building on the successes and changes this year, in September 2024 we plan to expand the enhanced/nurture provision to include afternoon provision and increase the number of children accessing nature play provision at Dyson. The school has commissioned a feasibility study to remodel part of the main site so that it is able to increase dinner provision to accommodate more full-time children. Everyone in the school continues to be ambitious for our children and we look forward to inspectors returning next year to share our progress.

Jakeman Nursery School – New planting & growing garden



This year, we have worked with our children to develop the planting and growing area outside. Children mapped out the space and decided what they wanted to plant: flowers, strawberries, onions and potatoes are just a few of the things they requested. The children wanted a place to dig and explore mud; a mud-pit planter was kept just for this! With a little bit of help, children came up with the idea of a special place to change into wellies and waterproofs.



We were able to secure £10,000 through the Nature Park Project which enabled us to bring the children's ideas and wishes to life. From designing planters, to planting the flowers, plants, fruit and vegetables, children learnt about the importance of nature and habitation and the impact this has on our planet. They were confident in knowing their right to healthy food and their right to live in a safe environment.

Following lots of nurturing of the plants, watering and feeding them, the children are learning how to care for their environment.

We have seen the full process of 'seed to plate' from our previously established (much smaller) vegetable patch and children are now beginning to enjoy the fruition of their work! After harvesting, they enjoyed eating the strawberries and using some of the vegetables for cooking. Our once grey space is now full of colour and scent, to be enjoyed by all Jakeman children, now and in the future.



Lillian de Lissa Nursery School – Community Stay & Plays



At Lillian de Lissa Nursery School we are really proud of our work in the community, as we have set up two stay and play groups. These sessions are the only stay and play groups within our local area, so they form an important function for the needs of the local community.

We run our stay and plays group sessions on a Tuesday and Friday morning. These sessions bring the young families from our community together. It is an opportunity for parents, carers and their children to connect and socialise together. We also encourage our new starters to attend stay and play as a transition arrangement before they start at nursery.

The stay and play sessions also include snack time as well as singing and story time at the end of the session. This group session ends with using our famous bubble machine.

Recently this term, we have started to invite the family hub team based at Doddington Children's Centre to Lillian de Lissa Nursery School. Collaboratively with the family hub team and our parents, we are planning around the future needs of the community together and we aim to set up more group sessions in Edgbaston throughout the next academic year.

Newtown Nursery School – Outstanding recognition from Ofsted



The school has experienced a rapid cycle of change since the ungraded (section 8) Ofsted inspection last year (31 January 2023) which had identified that the curriculum and SEND provision needed some development. During this academic year the school has strengthened leadership capacity creating a new leadership team.

The school has developed & implemented an ambitious curriculum plan for all children. Comprehensive staff training has ensured that children with special educational needs are included and their learning needs are met. The outdoor area has been refurbished to create an extended nature space with a growing area and the indoor learning environments have been decorated and re-organised to support children's access to high quality continuous provision & resources.

The school received a graded (Section 5) Ofsted inspection on 5 & 6 March 2024 and **we are all so proud that we have retained an outstanding judgment:**

“Leaders have created an exciting curriculum. It is well designed, sequenced and structured. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are very well supported. Staff are very skilled at delivering the curriculum because of the excellent training they receive. Staff morale is high. There is an unmistakable sense of collaboration and teamwork. Staff know that leaders take their well-being seriously. Leaders and governors never stop thinking about what they can do to make the school even better.” (Ofsted March 24)

Shenley Fields Nursery School – New Sensory Garden



Through observation of some of our children with significant developmental needs, we identified that they would regularly seek quieter, darker spaces, often in corners or near to boundaries. Here, they appeared to be self-regulating and “re-charging”.



Using DAF funding and some EYPP, a sensory garden was installed in a space that was not often used due to its position (a blind spot). This garden currently comprises of existing trees with new, all-weather surfaces. Some sound, light and colour exploration resources have been installed. We have begun observing how our children respond to this space and then this will help us to plan how next to develop their experiences. Through observation of some of our children with significant developmental needs, we identified that they would regularly seek quieter, darker spaces, often in corners or near to boundaries. Here, they appeared to be self-regulating and “re-charging”. The children with complex needs have been overjoyed with the new space. They are all using their different communication strategies to request to visit the garden on a daily basis. Children are loving the coloured Perspex, where they can play “peekaboo” and develop shared attention. They are developing their sense of self through catching sight of themselves in the full-length mirror.

Many children are fascinated by the sound of water running through the drain pipe, spending time looking for the water source. Moving forward, an interactive water feature will be installed to build upon their current interests. We are now planning to open up this space to all children from the three provisions during group time sessions which will focus upon well-being, mindfulness and physical entitlement.

St Thomas Centre Nursery School – Parent – Child Workshops



Our school has continued its series of creative workshops, with a recent session dedicated to exploring the theme of 'consistencies'. This innovative workshop invited both children and parents to delve into the fascinating world of textures and properties through a variety of hands-on workstations.

During the workshop, children were encouraged to engage with materials using all of their senses. This multi-sensory approach allowed them to experience different textures and properties in a direct and meaningful way. From the smoothness of clay to the graininess of sand, each workstation provided a unique sensory experience that captivated the children's curiosity.

Promoting Curiosity and Inquiry

The diverse materials and activities prompted a wealth of questions and new lines of enquiry. Children were not only passive participants but active investigators. They wondered aloud about why certain materials felt the way they did, how different textures could be combined, and what new properties could emerge from their experiments.

Fostering Creativity and Learning

This exploration was more than just play; it was an educational journey. The children had the opportunity to explore their own ideas and learn about new concepts in a supportive environment. By manipulating materials and observing the results, they gained insights into the properties of various substances, such as viscosity, elasticity, and absorbency.

Parent Involvement

The inclusion of parents in this workshop was a key element. Their participation not only strengthened the home-school connection but also provided a model of collaborative learning. Parents and children worked together to investigate the materials, fostering a sense of community and shared discovery.

By engaging all the senses and promoting active inquiry, we have provided our children with valuable opportunities to explore, learn, and grow. We look forward to continuing this series of workshops and furthering our commitment to creative and experiential learning.