

Ganneys Meadow Nursery School and Family Centre

New Hey Road, Woodchurch, Wirral, Merseyside CH49 8HB

Inspection dates

19–20 September 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Ganneys Meadow Nursery school continues to provide children with an excellent start to school life.
- The headteacher is an outstanding leader with a profound and extensive knowledge of early years development. She leads by example and is ably supported by a highly knowledgeable governing body and motivated staff.
- The uniqueness of each child is respected. Staff know the likes, dislikes and needs of the children in their key groups exceptionally well.
- Outstanding teaching fosters children's love of learning. Learning is active and fun. Exciting activities capture children's curiosity and imagination.
- Children start at the nursery with a wide range of starting points. All groups of children make rapid gains in their learning and achieve well.
- Within the local area, and beyond, the nursery has earned an enviable reputation for enabling children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to thrive.
- The local authority uses this school as an exemplar of excellent practice.
- Children behave beautifully. Their joy at being at Ganneys Meadow is evident from the moment they walk through the door with happy, smiley faces.
- Children's safety is top priority. From the minute they start school, children learn how to play safely and staff's vigilant supervision ensures that they are safe. Safeguarding duties are taken seriously and all welfare requirements are met.
- Parents hold the school in the highest regard. They typically comment about the 'huge impact' that the school has had on their children's progress and development.
- The quality of teaching is monitored very closely. However, the headteacher has identified that teachers could plan even more precisely if feedback after lesson observations included data about pupil groups. She also recognises that even more opportunities could be available to allow staff to observe and learn from other colleagues.
- There is strong capacity within the school to sustain this outstanding judgement and a great enthusiasm to do so.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the feedback given to teachers after observations of teaching and learning provides more information about the progress that different groups of children are making.
- Provide even more opportunities for staff to observe and learn from each other.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher, who joined the school in 2016, is highly ambitious for both children and staff. Her energy is boundless and she never stands still. She is continually looking for ways to improve. She brings a wealth of experience in early years and a proven track record of delivering outstanding outcomes for Nursery and Reception children. Her impact on this school was summed up eloquently by the local authority adviser who stated, 'she has taken this school to a higher level.'
- Under her steer, numerous changes have been made. For example, the quality of the learning environment has been further enhanced and tighter procedures are now in place to monitor, track, and analyse the progress of all groups of children. Particularly noteworthy is the 'nurture base' unit which she has set up to care for children with very complex needs. Many of these children have been referred on to the nursery from other local early years providers, including schools.
- The headteacher has her finger firmly on the pulse of the school. She knows the school intimately. Self-evaluation is accurate and honest.
- Staff work very well as a team and have a voice in the school. They are very aware of the school's priorities and what the headteacher is trying to achieve. With her support and encouragement, many staff have been empowered to develop their roles in education. Those who are new to the profession feel valued and well supported by the headteacher and other colleagues.
- Plans for improvement are clearly set out in the school development plan. Actions are monitored frequently and lines of accountability are very clear.
- The headteacher makes regular and detailed checks on the quality of teaching. Staff appreciate the feedback that she gives them to help them develop their practice. However, although detailed in most areas, the headteacher has identified that feedback after formal lesson observations does not always provide staff with enough information about the progress that different groups of pupils are making. Furthermore, she acknowledges that there are not enough opportunities to allow staff to observe and learn from each other through peer-to-peer observations.
- There is a strong commitment to ongoing professional development keeping teaching skills fresh and up to date. Training is securely linked to school priorities. Performance management targets set by the headteacher for staff are now more aspirational and challenging.
- Children experience a rich and broad curriculum which is securely linked to their interests. The curriculum is enriched further by a lovely range of interesting trips and visitors to the school. This broadens children's experiences. Plans are also afoot to take the children to Chester Zoo soon.
- Promoting British values is a fundamental part of the school's work and is embedded in practice. All children are welcome at Ganneys Meadow, irrespective of their race, gender or culture. Through the celebration of cultural festivals and resources children

are made aware that they live in very diverse world with many different faiths and cultures. Consequently, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.

- Well-considered spending of the early years pupil premium has a positive effect on the achievement of disadvantaged children. It is used mainly to increase staffing levels but also to provide therapeutic sessions such as yoga. Such effective practice supports these children to become inquisitive and resilient learners.
- The special educational needs funding is spent equally as well to ensure that the needs of this group of children are very well met in a sharing and inclusive environment.
- Parents travel from far afield to send their children to Ganneys Meadow. They are very supportive of the quality of care and education that the school provides for their children. Typical comments from parents include: 'Staff are always happy to go the extra mile' and 'I have recommended Ganneys Meadow to a number of other parents, especially if their children have additional needs.'
- Transition arrangements into the nursery and onwards to primary school are effective.
- Collaborative working is a real strength of this school. The headteacher works tirelessly with the local authority to support other schools and private day nurseries to develop further their early years practice and improve outcomes for children. Stronger links have also now been established with several universities in Liverpool and Chester to support students in achieving qualified teacher status.
- The local authority holds the school and the headteacher in the highest regard. They consider the school to be a centre of excellence and as such offer it 'light touch' support.

Governance of the school

- Governors provide high levels of support and challenge to the school. They are very proud of the school and its achievements.
- Governors are regular visitors to the school and have an in-depth knowledge about the quality of teaching and the progress that different groups of pupils are making, including those who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Governors bring a variety of experiences to their roles, including some from an educational background.
- A close eye is kept on the budget to ensure that the school remains sustainable.
- There is a designated governor for safeguarding and a safeguarding audit has been completed.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders work well with parents and other stakeholders to make sure that children are

well supported and kept safe.

- Staff have a good awareness of the indicators of abuse or neglect. They understand the procedures to follow should they be concerned about a child's welfare and they are aware that anyone can make a referral to the relevant authorities.
- Those responsible for safeguarding have completed training at the appropriate level.
- There are comprehensive procedures in place for the recruitment, selection and induction of staff.
- The single central record is compliant. All records relating to safeguarding are fit for purpose and contain all the required detail. Records relating to vulnerable children are stored securely.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Central to the outstanding teaching is the trusting and highly positive relationships that staff have established with the children. Staff know their key children and families very well.
- Staff have a secure understanding of the key principles of the early years foundation stage and of the importance of learning through play. Carefully planned tasks inspire children to learn. Great care is taken to ensure that learning is active but, most of all, fun. Children rise to the high expectations of staff for their work and behaviour.
- Staff make good use of their voices and facial gestures to capture and sustain children's interests.
- The quality of the learning environment, particularly indoors, makes a significant contribution to the excellent progress that children make. Children have ample space to move around freely and learn in comfort. Resources are made from natural materials, ensuring that children are provided with real-life experience. All play materials are of very good quality and stored at child height. This allows children to make free choices about their play and become independent learners.
- Staff spend of all their time interacting with the children, whether they are indoors or outside. No learning time is wasted and every opportunity is taken to assess children's learning and to monitor their progress. Staff meet at the end of each day to review the day's events and to plan the next steps in children's learning.
- Skilled staff throughout the nursery use questioning effectively to probe and deepen children's learning. This was exemplified during a mathematics activity, when questioning was used very well to encourage children to identify numbers randomly and then sequence them in the correct order.
- Speaking and listening skills are promoted effectively by all staff. Conversation flows freely as children play. Staff model the correct use of language well, encouraging children to respond to their questions in sentences. New and exciting words, such as 'wiggle', 'hubble' and 'bubble' are spontaneously introduced by staff as children play. Such highly effective practice helps to develop further children's acquisition of language.
- Children thoroughly enjoy listening to stories, either as part of a group or reading on

their own for pleasure. Stimulating and attractive book areas are available in all playrooms, which helps to foster children's love of reading.

- A wide range of mark-making materials are available to encourage children to develop their writing skills. For example, boys laughed with delight as they used paint brushes and water to make marks on the wall outdoors while others made a range of interesting marks on the ground using coloured chalks. Another group worked well together making marks in coloured sand using a variety of tools such as whisks, nailbrushes and wooden spoons.
- Outdoor learning activities in the woodland area, at the back of the school, are used exceptionally well to develop many aspects of children's learning. For example, children enjoyed exploring the natural environment looking for slugs and using magnifying glasses to observe spiders in their webs. They relished making mud pies, creating patterns using leaves, conkers and stones and making snowballs from hailstones.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote children's personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding.
- Children are given a thorough induction when they start at Ganneys Meadow. The first few weeks are spent settling the children in. Children are taught what is expected of them, the routines and the rules. Getting the children settled and ready to learn is key to the school's effectiveness.
- Children display a real thirst for knowledge and they are very keen to learn, partly because it is so much fun. They skip into school each morning eager to see what staff have planned for them. Children feel, and are, very safe.
- Right from the start, children are encouraged to be independent and take responsibility. They tidy up at the end of the session, put on their own coats, serve their own cereal and pour their own drinks. Staff are highly skilled at standing back and letting children have a go and knowing when to intervene to offer support.
- The school is a happy, calm and harmonious place for children to learn. In addition to their educational needs, children's emotional needs are exceptionally well met, most notably in the 'nurture room', which is exclusively for children with complex needs.
- Children's achievements are constantly celebrated through verbal praise and displays of their work. Such effective practices promote children's confidence and self-esteem successfully.
- Lunchtime is a pleasurable experience for children. Tables are beautifully covered with tablecloths and attractively set out with coloured cups and cutlery. Children are taught key skills such as holding a knife and fork properly and sitting at the table while eating food. Meals provided are healthy and nutritious.
- Children raise money for charitable purposes to help other children and families in difficult circumstances.

- Teaching children how to keep themselves safe is a central part of the schools' work. For example, from an early age they are taught how to use real tools such as saws and hammers safely. They also learn about online safety at an age-appropriate level. Representatives from the police service and fire brigade come into the nursery to talk to the children about personal safety.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of children is outstanding.
- Children are exceptionally polite and very well mannered.
- Both children and staff give visitors to the school a very warm welcome.
- Staff have very high expectations of children's behaviour. Children show very good levels of cooperation. They are very aware of the importance of sharing and taking turns.
- Children look smart in their school uniform and wear it with pride.
- The school does everything possible to encourage parents to bring their children to school. The importance of regular attendance is given a high profile. Any unexplained absences are followed up promptly.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Children start in the nursery with variable starting points. More recently, a greater number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have started at the school with knowledge and skills that are significantly below those that are typical for their age.
- From their different starting points, all groups of children make excellent progress. This is most notable in their personal, social and development, communication and language, physical development and mathematics. Children move on to primary school as happy, confident individuals who enjoy learning new things.
- When children start at school, staff quite rightly focus on getting the foundations right, especially about children's social, physical, communication and language skills. Rapid progress in other key areas, such as reading, writing and mathematics, follows because children are ready, able and keen to learn.
- A close watch is kept on the progress that different groups of children make. Data is frequently analysed. As a result, any underachievement is quickly identified and dealt with swiftly.
- Taking into consideration their diverse and often very complex needs, children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong and often rapid gains in their learning. This is a result of excellent teaching, timely interventions, particularly in the 'nurture room', and good partnership working with outside agencies. Parents of this group of children are effusive about the 'amazing' progress that their children make during their time at the nursery. This is because their needs are very closely analysed and then provided for.

- Disadvantaged children perform as well as their peers and sometimes better. This is a result of the effective spending of the early years pupil premium, which is used in some imaginative ways to give these children the help they need to flourish.
- The needs of children who learn more quickly are met very well. Activities are adapted so that they challenge this group of children to think harder.
- Above all else, the school succeeds in its aim to 'enable each child to reach their full potential building upon their experience'.

School details

Unique reference number	104986
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10003648

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	111
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Cretney
Headteacher	Lisa Walsh
Telephone number	0151 677 9255
Website	www.ganneysmeadow.co.uk
Email address	schooloffice@ganneysmeadow.wirral.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 December 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is an averaged-sized nursery school.
- Almost all children are of White British heritage.
- Some children attend the nursery school on a part-time basis, either mornings or afternoons. Others attend 30 hours a week.
- The proportion of children who are entitled to the early years pupil premium funding is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.

- Some children who have very complex special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported through education, health and care plans.
- A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning at various times during the two days of inspection. The headteacher carried out one joint observation with the inspector.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and staff.
- The inspector also met with two members of the governing body, the headteacher from a local feeder primary school and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector also spoke to parents at the beginning of the day as they brought their children to school.
- The inspector talked to children as they played and looked at examples of their work in their learning journals and on display.
- The school's work was analysed and the inspector looked at a range of documentation, including the school improvement plan and records relating to the quality of teaching. Documentation relating to attendance, safeguarding and the tracking of children's progress was also considered.
- Account was also taken of the Ofsted online questionnaires completed by parents.

Inspection team

Sheila Iwaskow, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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