

Stonehill Nursery School

Stonehill Road, Derby, Derbyshire DE23 6TJ

Inspection dates

11 to 12 June 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has cultivated an effective team. Leaders have successfully addressed the weaknesses found at the previous inspection. Children receive a good quality of education.
- Leaders are aspirational for all children. They develop effective relationships with parents, carers and the local community.
- Leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school's performance. They use professional development effectively. The quality of teaching is rapidly improving.
- The curriculum is dynamic and engaging. Leaders and staff ensure that learning is based on the children's needs and interests.
- Staff morale is high. They value the support they receive from senior leaders.
- Additional funding is used effectively. Children with special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged children make good progress.
- The provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- Staff provide exciting activities for children to learn through play and are skilled in engaging children in their learning very effectively by harvesting their natural curiosity.
- Staff develop and promote an enjoyment of reading. Children enjoy sharing and joining in with their favourite stories.
- Leaders ensure that the safety and well-being of children is paramount. Staff develop positive relationships with children. The level of care children receive is very good.
- Staff model and promote language and vocabulary well. Children learn to speak English quickly.
- Children have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. They are kind, tolerant and polite. They care about each other and enjoy playing together.
- Children behave well. However, some children do not attend school regularly enough.
- The teaching of phonics is developing. However, the most able children do not apply their phonics knowledge in writing. They do not make the progress of which they are capable in this area.
- From very low starting points, children make strong progress in most areas of learning. Although improving, their attainment remains below that typically expected for their age.
- Senior leaders are beginning to develop teachers' leadership skills. However, it is too early to see the impact of this work.
- Governors are increasingly skilled in asking challenging questions. However, they do not access enough training to be able to fully hold leaders to account.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - senior leaders continue to improve the leadership skills of teachers so they contribute more effectively to improving the quality of teaching, learning and outcomes in their areas of responsibility
 - governors continue to access training to develop their knowledge and understanding of the early years framework so they increasingly hold leaders to account for children's outcomes.
- Improve the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that staff provide regular opportunities for children, particularly the most able, to learn phonics and apply the knowledge they acquire in mark-making activities so they make better progress in writing.
- Improve outcomes by ensuring that more children leave school with skills typically expected for their age, particularly in literacy and numeracy, so they are better prepared for the next stage of education.
- Improve attendance by ensuring that leaders continue to work effectively with parents and carers to encourage more children to attend school more regularly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher leads the school by example. She has established an effective and cohesive senior leadership team. Together, they have quickly and successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. The quality of education children receive is good and rapidly improving.
- Leaders and staff are committed to providing a high level of care and are aspirational for every child and their family. They know the local community very well and develop positive relationships with parents and carers from the earliest possible stages. Parents value the school highly. A typical parental comment was, 'My child loves the staff. They genuinely care about the children and me.'
- Leaders know the strengths of the school's provision. They are reflective and continually look to improve the school's performance. They have effective plans in place to further improve the quality of teaching and children's outcomes. Most targeted professional development is used effectively, particularly in improving staff's knowledge and understanding of the development of children's language and vocabulary.
- Senior leaders and governors have increased leadership capacity since the previous inspection. The newly appointed early years lead teacher has brought new ideas to the school and has worked determinedly to improve the school's curriculum and assessment procedures. The curriculum is broad, balanced and dynamic, both indoors and outdoors. Regular reviews of children's learning take place to ensure that activities are well matched to children's needs and interests.
- Leaders and staff work with success to develop an effective culture that promotes a love of reading and communication. They understand the barriers that exist for children who have English as an additional language. There are effective strategies in place to ensure that children acquire English quickly through shared reading experiences with adults at school and at home.
- Following the previous inspection, there was a decline in staff morale. Senior leaders have worked with sensitivity and drive to improve this and ensure all staff feel valued and well supported. The staff team is strong and effective. There is a shared passion to provide the best possible education for all children. They appreciate the support of leaders and morale is now high.
- Leaders ensure that the small amount of early years pupil premium funding for disadvantaged children is used effectively. Leaders recognise that some disadvantaged children have weaker communication and language skills. Funding is used to provide whole-staff training in targeted approaches to improving children's speech and language skills and specific parenting programmes, such as 'positive parenting' classes and classes to make 'story sacks' to use at home. Leaders skilfully monitor and track the academic and holistic achievements of disadvantaged children so provision can be regularly adapted to successfully meet their needs.
- The leadership of the provision for children with SEND is strong. Leaders and staff ensure that children's needs are identified early, and in partnership with parents. Funding is used to provide tailored small group and one-to-one support, with a focus

on developing children's communication skills. Leaders ensure that the curriculum for children with SEND is effectively adapted so they can work alongside their peers. For example, all staff are trained in Makaton, which is used to support communication throughout the school, and specialist equipment is used for children with hearing and visual impairments. Leaders use external agencies, such as educational psychologists, speech and language therapists and health visitors, to provide specialist support and advice for children with SEND.

- The provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Leaders ensure that children have a wide range of opportunities to learn about different people and faiths. For example, they celebrate Diwali, Eid and Christmas. Children enjoy sharing stories from other cultures and singing nursery rhymes in different languages. Children are active within the local community. They visit the post office to send letters and receive visits from local police officers. Children have an age-appropriate understanding of fundamental British values and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Senior leaders and governors have plans in place to develop the leadership skills of teachers. They understand the need to use teachers' knowledge and expertise to improve outcomes across the school. However, these plans are in the early stages of development and, as yet, it is too early to see the impact of this work in relation to improving children's attainment across the areas of learning.

Governance of the school

- Governors are proud of the school and of the work that leaders have undertaken to improve the school since the previous inspection. They receive detailed reports from the headteacher about the school's performance. As a result, they have a growing understanding of the strengths and weaknesses that exist.
- Governors are becoming increasingly skilled in asking challenging questions during visits to school and in meetings of the governing body. Governors have established a 'strategy' group to ensure that regular reviews of the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement are checked and scrutinised.
- The governing body fulfils its statutory duties. The governor responsible for safeguarding makes regular checks of the school's recruitment and vetting procedures and visits the school regularly to meet with safeguarding leads to discuss the application of the school's safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Some governors undertake training to improve their knowledge and understanding of specific areas such as safeguarding. However, governors do not have a thorough enough understanding of the early years framework and the impact of the additional funding on children's outcomes. They have not received enough training in these areas to be able to fully hold leaders to account.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that the safety and well-being of children is paramount. Leaders keep detailed records of incidents and respond promptly to concerns that staff raise about

the safety of children. They act quickly to ensure that children at risk of harm receive timely support and intervention from external agencies. They are tenacious in pursuing support if it is not forthcoming.

- Leaders work hard to provide 'in-house' support for vulnerable children and families. Leaders and staff provide a range of support, including home visits, parents' workshops and small-group parenting programmes. The curriculum is planned effectively to provide many opportunities for children to learn how to stay safe. For example, children learn about online safety and receive visits from police officers and fire fighters to discuss road and fire safety.
- Leaders ensure that staff are well trained and vigilant. Staff recognise that 'safeguarding is everyone's business'. They receive annual safeguarding training, regular safeguarding updates and paediatric first-aid training. Consequently, staff are aware of the signs of abuse, they are quick to spot changes in children's behaviour and/or attendance and act swiftly to report these concerns to leaders. Parents overwhelmingly agree that their children are kept safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Staff develop positive relationships with children and demonstrate high levels of care. They use their knowledge of children's needs and interests, alongside strong subject knowledge, to plan exciting activities that are well matched to most children's abilities in most areas of learning.
- Parents agree that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. They value the efforts of staff in ensuring that children settle into school and establish effective routines. A comment, typical of parents, was, 'My child is very happy and settled. They love coming to nursery every day.'
- Staff model language effectively. They use a range of techniques to teach children new language, such as emphasis, repetition and the use of physical and visual cues. For example, one member of staff supported children in the water area to understand the words 'full' and 'empty'. She showed children an empty bowl and said, 'Look. The bowl is empty. EMPTY.'
- Staff are determined for children to acquire English quickly. They use 'five words of the week' to teach children new vocabulary linked to books and everyday objects. They place these words on the 'vocabulary tree' and encourage children to practise and remember them. Staff send these words home so parents can support their child's language development. A comment, typical of parents, was, 'I am very happy with the progress my child makes. They have grown in confidence and their vocabulary has improved massively.'
- Staff develop children's love of sharing and reading books successfully. They ensure that core books are available throughout each area of provision. They share stories with children every day and encourage them to revisit books they enjoy. As a result, children enthusiastically recall key events from stories and join in with repetitive sentences from favourite stories such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' and 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'.
- Staff use questioning effectively. They ask questions which encourage children to think carefully and investigate. For example, children playing with water beads were asked,

'What will happen if I squeeze the water beads?'

- Staff skilfully model their own thinking to encourage children to be critical and creative thinkers. One member of staff supported a child to draw a house. Throughout the process she modelled her own thinking while drawing. For example, she said, 'I wonder how many windows my house will have. I think one, two, three windows,' and 'I wonder who will live in my house. I think I will live with my mummy and daddy.'
- Staff ensure they use opportunities throughout the day to develop children's number skills. For example, during snack time, staff modelled how to set up the table with cups and plates. They asked children to count the correct number of cups needed and to count out the fruit onto plates.
- Staff use children's curiosity effectively in order to develop and deepen learning in understanding the world, particularly in the outdoor provision. For example, staff were quick to spot that children were engaged in jumping in puddles. Staff intelligently moved learning on to talk about floating and sinking. They modelled this using rubber ducks and testing whether they would float on the puddle.
- Staff provide many varied opportunities for children to learn through play. They provide age-appropriate resources, which ensure that children can be creative and imaginative. For example, children in the provision for two-year-olds were setting up the table ready for dinner in the home corner. They role-played filling the teapot with water at the sink, poured each other drinks and sipped from cups.
- The teaching of phonics is developing. Staff model accurately the letters and the sounds they make. They encourage children to listen for sounds in the environment and for initial sounds in simple words. However, staff do not always encourage children, particularly the most able, to use and apply this knowledge in their play and mark making. Consequently, some children, particularly the most able, are unable to write some familiar letter shapes and to recall the sounds they have been taught.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Children of all ages enjoy coming to school. They have exceptionally positive attitudes. Children are curious and independent learners who relish learning and investigating through play.
- Children are tolerant, caring and respectful. They play together harmoniously, taking turns and sharing equipment. Children do not recognise the differences between each other. Typically, children said, 'We are all friends.'
- Children are resilient learners who persevere when faced with challenge. For example, one child was building a train line using straight pieces of track. When she got to the wall she could not add further straight pieces. She spent considerable time thinking until she discovered the curved pieces of track. She carefully added these to continue her track away from the wall.
- Children are encouraged to be responsible. They enjoy developing independent skills.

They take on age-appropriate tasks, such as tidying away resources, sweeping the garden area and serving snacks.

- Children are proud of their work. They are reflective about their learning and what they have done well. For example, children choose their own 'wow moments': pieces of work of which they are especially proud, to go in their learning journey.
- Children manage their feelings and behave well. They use the 'feelings wall' to talk about how they feel and what help they might need if they feel sad or angry. Children have a strong sense of empathy. For example, one child fell over in the classroom. Immediately, another child came to check on her and ask if 'she was ok'.
- Children have an age-appropriate understanding of how to stay safe, including online. They learn how to stay safe near roads and at home. Children say they have a trusted adult in school to whom they would tell their worries.
- Children have an excellent, age-appropriate understanding of how to stay healthy. Children know about the importance of eating fruit and vegetables and doing regular exercise. They know how to look after their bodies. For example, children enjoy brushing their teeth in school and know if they do not do this regularly at home then they may get cavities in their teeth.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders and staff have high expectations of children's behaviour. They model expectations effectively. They encourage children to say 'please' and 'thank you' and how to share and take turns. Because of this, children are kind, polite and behave very well.
- Leaders and staff work successfully to develop a positive approach to parenting. They actively engage with parents and offer many courses and workshops to support families with aspects of behaviour at home. For example, the use of 'play partners' is used so parents can come to school and see staff interacting with children and modelling strategies to encourage good behaviour.
- Parents and children agree that behaviour and conduct is strong throughout the school. Parents say that children are safe, well cared for and that there is no bullying in school.
- The attendance of children is improving over time. Leaders are successfully reducing persistent absence by providing effective support to families and flexible nursery hours. However, there are still too many children who do not attend school regularly enough. This is the reason why this aspect of the school's work is judged to be good rather than outstanding.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Current records of children's learning show that most children, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, make strong progress from their very low starting points across most areas of learning. Children's progress is particularly strong in communication and language, and in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Children make strong progress in understanding and using number and this is rapidly improving over time. Most children aged three and four successfully count to 10, identify numbers one to five in varied formats, and understand the language of 'more' and 'less'.
- Children make strong progress in reading. They enjoy sharing books with adults and can successfully recall the main events from stories they have frequently read. Children join in with nursery rhymes and have a growing understanding of words that rhyme.
- Current records of children's learning show that children make strong progress in understanding the world. Children have a good understanding of different people and festivals, they investigate cause and effect in everyday situations and are skilled in using age-appropriate technologies.
- Children who have attended the school from the age of two make better progress than children who attend from the age of three. Increasingly effective teaching in the provision for two- and three-year-olds ensures that many children leave this phase with skills typical for their age and are better prepared for the three- and four-year-olds' provision.
- Children's attainment across all areas of learning is improving over time. However, a number of children leave school with skills below those typically expected for their age, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Some of these children are not fully prepared for the next stage of education.
- Evidence from current records of children's learning shows that most children make good progress in writing. However, the most able children do not make the progress they are capable of in this area. Staff do not ensure that children apply what they have been taught in phonics so that mark making progresses into emergent writing. Because of this, some of the most able children cannot recall the letter sounds they have been taught or write these sounds as recognisable letters.

School details

Unique reference number	112476
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10087335

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 pupils	2 to 4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthony Adams
Headteacher	Louise Foster
Telephone number	01332 341 636
Website	www.stonehillnurseryderby.com
Email address	admin@stonehill.derby.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February to 1 March 2017

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized Nursery school.
- The school is federated with Dale Community Primary School.
- The headteacher of Dale Community Primary School became the headteacher of the school in March 2017, and now works as the headteacher across both schools. The schools share one governing body.
- The current early years lead teacher was appointed in September 2017.
- The proportion of children with SEND is average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged children is below average but is increasing over time.
- The proportions of children from ethnic minority backgrounds and of children who have English as an additional language are well above those seen nationally.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in both classes and at group times. The inspector met with a group of children to talk about their learning and experiences in school. He scrutinised records of children's learning with leaders.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, early years lead teacher, the coordinator of the provision for pupils with SEND and groups of staff. He held a meeting with a representative from the local authority and a further meeting with two members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including those relating to safeguarding, children's outcomes and attendance, and records of the school leaders' monitoring and evaluation of the quality of education. The inspector also examined the school leaders' plans for improvement, plans for the use and impact of the additional funding, minutes from meetings of the governing body and information available on the school's website.
- The inspector spoke with parents informally at the start of the day. There were also 10 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors took account of the nine responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the children's survey.

Inspection team

Steve Varnam, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019