

Inspection of a good school: Horsham Nursery School

Harwood Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 5UT

Inspection date:

6 November 2019

Outcome

Horsham Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children feel comfortable and secure here because of the school's welcoming, calm and supportive atmosphere. Children settle quickly into school life. They behave extremely well and grow in confidence daily.

The school is a hive of activity, both indoors and out. Children are busy from the moment they arrive to the time they go home. They have great fun while learning and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Children make particularly good use of the outdoor area to explore all sorts of activities. For instance, during the inspection, children rode tricycles around the pathways, chatted to each other while they clambered and balanced on the climbing frame, practised writing letters in trays of glitter and tobogganed down the artificial hill, all under the watchful eye of adults.

Adults know how important the first weeks of school are in helping children to get off to a good start. They greet children warmly at the start of each session. Adults have high expectations of children's learning and look after them very well. They help children to make friends and sort out any upsets sensitively and without fuss. There are no concerns about bullying.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Children thoroughly enjoy school. They make friends, have fun and learn well. Activities are carefully designed to capture children's imagination. For example, during the inspection, adults used pumpkins, pumpkin seeds and nursery rhymes to help children to count.

The school provides a rich, stimulating and lively education, reflecting all the areas of learning expected. The school makes good use of visits, such as regular trips to the local woods, to enliven learning. Activities such as making leaf pictures, building sculptures and

spotting the first signs of spring help children to learn about the world around them.

Adults are very good at helping children to develop social skills. They are sensitive to children's needs and provide gentle support for children who are finding it tricky to get along with others. This means that children learn how to play and learn together and rapidly grow in confidence. For instance, during the inspection, several children worked well together to add the finishing touches to their model. The school's caring environment ensures that children learn without fear of bullying or harassment.

Adults make sure that learning builds strongly on children's starting points. For example, the teaching of phonics begins with the letters and sounds that children recognise in their own names. This means that children achieve success quickly and are soon ready to move on to new things.

The school provides children with a wide range of high-quality books. Adults use these well to promote reading. They encourage children to read often and children take a book home to read most days. They love listening to adults reading stories. During the inspection, children in the special support centre (SSC) listened intently while their teacher read 'Whatever Next'.

Adults keep a close eye on children's learning. They know what children need to learn next and prepare activities carefully with this in mind. Most children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn well. However, some children, and particularly the most able, could achieve even more. For instance, the teaching of writing skills does not always extend children's understanding fully enough. Leaders have already identified this as a development priority.

Leaders have worked hard to make sure that the new SSC is fully resourced and ready to go. The provision is well equipped to support children with SEND. SSC staff are experienced and knowledgeable. They provide skilful support for the children, who have settled well into new routines.

The headteacher and her leadership team have high aspirations for all children. They continuously look for ways of improving children's learning, and work constructively with the staff team. Staff told us that they feel well supported, appreciated and proud to work in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors give children's safety the highest priority. They complete recruitment checks fully so that children can learn safely. Leaders use training effectively to keep staff and governors up to date with developments in safeguarding requirements. They act quickly if they have any concerns about children's well-being.

The nursery building provides children with a clean, tidy and safe learning environment. Adults establish clear expectations and routines which help to keep children safe. For

instance, children understand the importance of washing their hands before snack time. They do so carefully and sensibly.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Children have regular opportunities to create stories and develop writing skills. They enjoy writing and love to hear adults reading their stories back to them. However, leaders know that some children could achieve more, particularly the most able children. They are currently adjusting the teaching of writing to ensure that children are encouraged to write for a wider range of subjects and purposes. Leaders need to continue with this work.
- Leaders are keen to see the SSC fully support eligible children. They have identified further developments needed to ensure that this is the case. For instance, they are working with the local authority to finalise the policy for referring and admitting children to the centre so that more children can benefit from specialist teaching. In addition, leaders have scheduled training for nursery staff to ensure that all adults are equally skilled in supporting children's needs. Leaders should continue with this work so that the centre is fully established and used well to support children who would benefit from it.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2012.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	125809
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10053194
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Damon Hughes
Headteacher	Debbie Carter
Website	www.horshamnursery.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 December 2015

Information about this school

- The school has separate provision for children between the ages of one and three, which operates on the same site. This provision was inspected by Ofsted in February 2018, when it was judged to be good.
- The school's SSC supports pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties. It opened in September 2019. Seven children are currently registered to attend the centre. They spend some of the time in the nursery and some of the time in the specially resourced centre.

Information about this inspection

- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders. We also met with three governors, with a group of teachers and with other members of staff.
- We did deep dives in the following subjects: literacy, mathematics, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. We discussed the curriculum, its delivery and its impact on children's learning with leaders. Our visit to the school included the outdoor area. We looked at the work and photographs in children's 'special folders'.

- We had a telephone discussion with a local authority representative.
- We evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding by reviewing leaders' knowledge, records and actions. This included looking at the single central record. We met with the designated safeguarding lead and with the school's business manager. We also spoke with parents, carers and staff.
- We took account of the views expressed by parents, children and staff during the inspection. We considered eight responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, including six free-text responses, and 12 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. We also spoke informally with parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

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