

Inspection of an outstanding school: Hungerford Nursery School Centre for Children

22 The Croft, Hungerford, Berkshire RG17 0HY

Inspection date:

20 October 2021

Outcome

Hungerford Nursery School Centre for Children continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Hungerford Nursery School Centre for Children provides children with a brilliant start to their education. Parents are delighted, telling inspectors 'This is an absolutely exceptional nursery with the most wonderful, passionate staff.' Families receive a warm welcome here and are encouraged to help with their children's development. The 'chatterbags', containing a story, puppets, toys and equipment, help families to get involved with their children's learning at home.

Children thrive here because staff equip them with the language, knowledge and attributes to last them a lifetime. Staff encourage children constantly, and their enthusiasm is infectious. Children try incredibly hard to please. They work, laugh and play, often unaware of the subtle questions and nudges that staff use to get the best out of them. Over time, children's confidence blossoms.

The nursery helps children to explore and understand their own and other's emotions. Children learn to enjoy their own company and how to be a good friend. Staff keep a very close eye on children. They help to guide their interactions, meaning that squabbles never get out of hand. This, coupled with the remarkably strong bond between adults and children, means that children feel safe, secure and valued.

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

Leaders have constructed an exceptionally detailed and ambitious curriculum which builds children's knowledge, skills and confidence. Rightly, they prioritise children's language and their social, emotional and physical development. The curriculum equips children with firm foundations that will serve them for years to come.

Leaders break the curriculum into small chunks and order these logically. Staff use their daily assessment meetings to decide when children are ready for their next steps or if they need to revisit learning. This means that children build their knowledge gradually and securely, only

moving on when they are ready. This approach is particularly effective for children who start the school with gaps in their language or social understanding.

Staff deliver the curriculum using a consistent set of highly effective approaches. Children know and recognise the 'language of learning' that is used throughout the school. This helps them to understand their tasks and learning even when their key worker or environment changes. All staff know the daily targets for their key children. They are adept at structuring activities that help the children to achieve their goals.

The promotion of language and vocabulary is a particular strength of the school. Staff make every word count, ensuring that children hear a wide and relevant vocabulary and are encouraged to use this themselves. The words children are taught are carefully considered, starting with the language of needs and wants, then conversational and descriptive language.

Right from the start, staff work closely with families to get an accurate insight into children's strengths, interests and needs. They analyse assessment information precisely, which helps leaders to identify any children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders create tailored plans, which help children to overcome any barriers they have to learning. Children with SEND make excellent progress because staff follow these plans and support children every step of the way.

Staff model the way they want children to act. They help children to understand and deal with challenges. As children learn how to communicate and share, their interactions with others increase. Children play together wonderfully. Inspectors observed a large group of children work as a team to eagerly build and fly their space rocket. At this nursery, laughter, imagination and joy abound.

Children's learning goes beyond the nursery gates, helping them to expand their horizons, experience and interests. Through the 'Explorer's Club' children learn about the local area and key public figures. They visit shops, bakeries, the emergency services and the church. This gives children a useful reference point when talking and playing. Children listen to stories and poems from a range of cultures. This develops their understanding of the world and people from a range of religions and races they may not have encountered yet.

Staff's workload is manageable because they receive excellent training and use clear and efficient systems. This means that they can focus on working with children without distraction. Staff feel appreciated and valued. They say that they 'get a buzz every day from working here'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are thoroughly vetted and are trained to provide appropriate care and medical assistance to all children. Staff receive excellent safeguarding training, which helps them to identify the signs that families and children may need extra support. There are clear systems for recording and reporting concerns. Leaders use this information well, taking the right action without hesitation.

Children learn useful language and signs to communicate that they need help or support. They learn to manage basic risks both in and out of school and how to ask for help or comfort when they need them.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in December 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 the school and 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	109755
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10200143
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	103
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing board	Maureen Martin
Headteacher	Suzanne Taylor
Website	www.hungerfordnurseryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 October 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The nursery is also the site of a family centre, which is also run by the leadership team and overseen by the governing board.
- The nursery admits children from the ages of two to four. Some children with education, health and care plans stay an extra term or longer at the nursery during their Reception Year as they complete their transition to primary or special school.
- In addition to the breakfast club, the nursery runs two sessions, with all children in attendance for the morning and most staying on for the additional afternoon session.
- The nursery does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors met with senior leaders and five governors, including the chair. An inspector held a telephone call with an officer from the local authority.

- Inspectors did deep dives in the three prime areas of learning: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development, and physical development. Inspectors talked to subject leaders, staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at children’s work. Inspectors then considered a wider range of evidence.
- The inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records and interviewing staff.
- The inspection team considered the views of parents shared through the Ofsted survey. They gathered the views of staff through surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection. Inspectors talked to children where possible and listened to their interactions with adults.

Inspection team

Daniel Lambert, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Linda Jacobs

Ofsted Inspector

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