

# Inspection of an outstanding school: McMillan Early Childhood Centre

Judge Heath Lane, Hayes UB3 2PD

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Inspection date: 23 November 2021

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Children are happy and very safe at this welcoming and supportive school. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in both classes. All staff have high expectations of children's behaviour. They explain the reasons for school rules in simple terms. For example, three-year-olds know not to lean back during a story time, because they might squash the person sitting behind them.

Children follow the pictorial timetables drawn by the staff. Children are friendly, independent, and keen to talk about their learning. They show their confidence by taking well-judged risks, for example when climbing and balancing on the climbing frame. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported very well. For instance, they are given specific help to improve their concentration.

There are no known instances of bullying. Children are taught to hold up their hands and say 'stop' if another child is bothering them.

Expectations for learning are not consistently as high as they could be. It is not always clear from the curriculum planning what staff expect children to learn from an activity. Children do not always gain knowledge and skills in the best order and at the right time.

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

Staff encourage children to take part in a wealth of activities across all areas of learning. Attractive activities indoors and outside engage the children's interests well. Staff support children in talking about their learning. For example, one three-year-old, who was counting, was proud to say, 'Look! Five pieces of fruit.' Staff have valuable conversations with children throughout the day. Children, including those who are learning English as an additional language, develop their spoken vocabulary well.

Relationships are a strength. Staff are skilled in supporting children in their personal development. They take every opportunity to promote respectful and polite behaviour. Staff teach children self-help skills, for example how to peel fruit and to find resources for themselves. There is very little low-level disruption.

Children develop their early reading skills well. Staff use props to aid understanding and to bring stories to life. For example, the two-year-olds discussed fruits as they ate them. They matched these to the fruit in 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' story. Repetition helps children to recognise familiar words and to join in with rhymes. Story times help children to love books and develop their vocabularies.

Staff work hard to enhance children's learning. They bring a wealth of new encounters, including from visits and visitors. This has been more challenging due to COVID-19 pandemic. Play corners are set up well to help children learn about their local community. For example, the role play 'baby clinic' and 'café' bring real-life experiences into school. Children enjoy weighing the 'babies' and noting which are heavier. Children celebrate festivals from various faiths. They are taught that everyone is different but equally special. Children learn about how to make decisions, such as choosing what they will do next.

Leaders and staff use thorough systems for checking children's learning. They quickly identify the needs of children with SEND. Staff support these children well so that they can take part in all activities.

Parents and carers are very pleased with the school. They find staff to be friendly and supportive. Parents made comments such as 'The staff really listen to me' and 'I couldn't ask for anything better'.

All children achieve well during their time at the school. However, weaknesses in curriculum planning mean that staff do not always extend children's learning as well as they should. The school's intentions for the curriculum are not consistently ambitious enough. Leaders do not always make clear in the planning what the different expectations are for two- and three-year-olds. This includes those children who are at school for 30 hours a week.

There has been a major restructuring of staffing teams this term in order to cut costs. Staff say that the workload has increased this term. They would value more time for team building and curriculum planning.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders check that all staff are suitable to work with children and are fully trained in safeguarding. They identify children who are at risk and provide support for them and their families in a timely fashion. This support includes appropriate help from outside the school, and individual and small group work within school.

Staff draw the children's attention to any safety risks during lessons and through the curriculum. For example, children are taught how to speak up if they are not happy with the way they are being treated by others. Consequently, children are confident, feel safe and play together safely.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Curriculum plans are not ambitious enough. They provide details about the activities children can take part in. However, they do not provide staff with clear enough guidance about what children should learn and in what order they should gain knowledge and skills. This means that staff do not always extend learning, especially for older and the most-able children. Leaders should ensure that curriculum planning provides greater guidance for staff about what is to be taught and when.

## **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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in September 2016.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102365
<b>Local authority</b>	Hillingdon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10199987
<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 3
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	90 (8 are full-time)
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Rose Worrton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ludmilla Morris
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://mcmillanearlychildhoodcentre.co.uk">mcmillanearlychildhoodcentre.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14 September 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school includes provision for two-year-old children.
- There has been a major restructuring of staffing this term.
- The governing body is also responsible for a separate Day Care Centre situated on the same site. The centre has a further 45 children. This did not form part of the inspection.

## 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.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the early years adviser for the local authority.
- We carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical development. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at

curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and teaching assistants, and spoke to children about their learning.

- Inspectors discussed safeguarding with members of staff and looked at various records and documents to do with safety.
- Discussions were also held with a representative of the governing body.
- We considered the responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the free-text responses. We spoke with parents at the school gate.

### **Inspection team**

Alison Cartlidge, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sarah Lack

Ofsted Inspector

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