

Inspection of an outstanding school: Walton Lane Nursery School

Walton Lane, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 8BP

Inspection date: 24 November 2021

Outcome

Walton Lane Nursery School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children love coming to their nursery school. They happily wave goodbye to their parents and carers when they arrive each day. Children cannot wait to take off their coats and begin to play and learn. There are so many exciting things to do, indoors and outdoors.

The nursery is a wonderful place for children to start their education. Leaders want nothing but the best for them. Talented staff know just how to engage children in learning. Children thrive and achieve extremely well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Children soon learn how to look after their own needs. For example, they know where to find the delicious healthy fruit for a snack when they are hungry. Children learn how to wash their hands carefully before they eat the fruit. These routines help children to develop independence and confidence in readiness for school.

Children's behaviour is excellent. They live up to staff's high expectations. They listen carefully to adults' instructions, for example, when it is time to stop playing and tidy up. Children do not disturb each other when they are concentrating, for example, at story time. Leaders and staff do not tolerate bullying and they deal with any incidents extremely well.

Relationships between staff, children and parents are strong. Children said they feel safe and secure. Parents who spoke with inspectors were delighted with the education provided by the leaders and staff.

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

Leaders provide an exciting curriculum, full of opportunities for children to develop and succeed in all areas of learning. This ensures that children thrive and learn, including those with SEND.

Leaders and staff are experts in supporting children's early learning and development. They have used this expertise to decide the most important knowledge that they want children to learn during their time in the nursery. The curriculum plans set out the order in which children need to learn this important knowledge. This ensures that children build up their learning securely and remember it well.

Staff have strong subject knowledge because leaders make sure that they receive valuable training. This enables staff to plan exciting activities for children that help them to learn extremely well. For example, children used their knowledge of story language when they made up their own version of 'The Gingerbread Man'. They remembered important new vocabulary and used some sign language as they recited the story. All children, including those with SEND, learn well in such activities.

Staff make story times magical. This helps children to develop a real love of reading and stories. Children listen with rapt attention to their favourite books as well as to new stories. Staff introduce them to a wide range of texts, for example rhyming stories and poetry. This helps children to hear and remember more and more new words. Children learn how to listen for sounds in their phonics activities. For example, they enjoy body percussion, when they tap out sounds on their hands and tummies. These listening activities prepare them well for learning about the sounds that letters represent in words.

Staff are skilled at checking that children have understood their learning. For example, children singing the number rhyme 'Five Little Ducks' were supported to correct themselves if they sang the numbers in the wrong order. This sensitive support ensures that children gain secure knowledge over time.

Leaders and staff work together to identify children who may have SEND. Leaders work extremely well with a range of professionals to make sure these children receive help promptly. Children with SEND learn as well as their classmates.

The learning environment helps children to develop high levels of independence and confidence for their age. Children quickly learn to find what they need. For example, children know where to find the paint and decorative glitter when they want to create a picture or a collage. They learn to put on their own coats, to make choices about where to play and to try out new experiences.

Children learn about diversity in their community and the wider world, for example, through enjoying stories about families from different cultures. They learn to share and to show each other care and concern. The nursery prepares children extremely well for primary school.

Governors receive a range of useful information from leaders, for example, about how well children are learning. They ask leaders challenging questions about the impact of the decisions they make for children. This helps to reassure them that the school is running well. Governors and leaders are considerate of staff's workload and well-being. Staff said they feel supported in their work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders regularly provide a range of safeguarding training for staff. For example, staff are trained to recognise the signs of abuse. Leaders and staff know what action to take should they have a concern about a child.

Leaders make sure that the learning environment is a safe place for children. Staff get to know children and families well. This helps them to recognise when children may be in need of help. Through their excellent working relationships with a range of professionals, leaders secure this help promptly for children.

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 May 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

Unique reference number	119079
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10199788
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Julie Haynes
Headteacher	Jan Holmes
Website	http://waltonlane.org
Date of previous inspection	24 and 25 May 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new chair has been appointed to the governing body.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: early reading, mathematics, and communication and language. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with curriculum leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of classroom activities, spoke to teachers and looked at children's learning records.
- The inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other areas of learning.

- The inspectors reviewed documentation, which included the leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and in their free-text comments. They also considered responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. The inspectors also spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe and reviewed the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.
- An inspector spoke with a few parents at the start of the day. The inspectors also spoke with staff to discuss leaders' support for them.

Inspection team

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jeremy Barnes

Ofsted Inspector

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 <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021