

Inspection of an outstanding school: Wingate Community Nursery School

Partridge Terrace, Wingate, County Durham TS28 5BD

Inspection date: 13 January 2022

Outcome

Wingate Community Nursery School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children really thrive at Wingate Community Nursery School. The environment is particularly rich in possibilities for children to explore. Children's confidence grows as they explore the children's kitchen, the little house, the library, the theatre, block play and small world, science and waterworks, the studio and the joinery workshop. Their curiosity develops as they discover the natural world in the garden and the allotments. Children spend lots of time outdoors when they attend the Cottage in the Woods. Their awareness of the natural world develops rapidly.

Every inch of space is utilised well. Children have access to a rich curriculum, which is well supported by the numerous resources at hand. Activities are real and meaningful. For example, children use real joinery tools to make wooden objects or follow recipes to bake cakes. The staff know the children extremely well. They patiently and skilfully facilitate children's play. Children acquire knowledge quickly because the staff know how to extend each child's thinking.

Children benefit greatly from well-planned days in the outdoors. Opportunities are skilfully created and capitalised on to develop the children's independence, resilience and knowledge of the world. These opportunities help children to develop a rich vocabulary. Children's positive character traits are recognised and rewarded. Parents really value the contribution the nursery makes to their child's happiness.

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

Leaders and governors at Wingate Community Nursery School have a very clear vision. Their ambitious leadership inspires staff, parents and the wider community for the good of the children. The curriculum offered is built into the remarkably rich and stimulating learning environments. The spaces available provide children with rich possibilities. Every space has opportunities to extend children's vocabulary. There are abundant opportunities to develop mathematical, scientific or artistic knowledge. Members of staff skilfully help children to make sense of the curriculum around them. Adults allow children to play, while

taking every opportunity to engage them in rich conversation. Some children develop expert knowledge in topics that interest them and enjoy sharing their knowledge with others. Consequently, children thrive as they discover the curriculum for themselves. Clear routines and a nurturing ethos help children to quickly make friends, learn social skills and grow emotionally.

Children's communication and language develop quickly. They learn to recognise their name tags and the sounds within their name. They sing together in family group time. They plan their day and reflect on what they have learned at the end of each session. Stories are used daily to introduce new vocabulary and ideas. As children play, members of staff listen, watch and help children to extend their ideas. Inspectors noted children using vocabulary that included 'spreading the butter', a 'leaking roof', 'echoes', 'transparent' and 'tabby cat patterns'.

Children's understanding of the world is impressive. Children who have spent time at the Cottage in the Woods or at the allotments have detailed knowledge about plants and animals. Their understanding of natural processes, such as growth and decay, is also sophisticated. This is because they are continually talking about the real and meaningful activities they undertake.

Members of staff use assessment well. They visit families before children start nursery. Initial, on-entry assessments quickly identify any child with additional needs. The targets within support plans are used well by staff to overcome children's barriers to learning. The staff record 'What am I noticing?' and 'What is happening here?' Their reflections help them to identify the next steps for each child.

Behaviour and attitudes to learning are excellent. For most of the day, children are absorbed in play. They grow increasingly confident and independent as the year progresses. Clear routines and procedures, such as family group time and tidy-up time, ensure children learn what is expected of them.

The headteacher considers the workload on staff carefully. Some changes have been made to reduce workload. For example, staff no longer keep such detailed journals of children's work and termly written assessments have been streamlined. Members of staff feel well supported, trusted and valued. Staff referred to the school as being 'like a family'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The headteacher makes sure that all adults who work in or visit the school are carefully vetted. The headteacher also ensures that all adults receive the training they need to know how to recognise the signs of abuse or neglect. Members of staff meet parents frequently and check on the children's welfare. The staff keep careful records and take immediate action if they have any concerns.

The staff have carefully considered children's health and safety at each site. They continually help children to understand potential risks. However, they do not mollycoddle children. They allow playfulness, encouraging children to develop a healthy awareness of the great outdoors. The approach helps children to play safely, with a spirit of adventure.

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 2013.

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	113971
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10211145
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	76
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Barbara Kaye Beels
Headteacher	Becky Wood
Website	www.wingate-nur.durham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has recently added an additional teaching site at the Cottage in the Woods, Wingate TS28 5AL. Children attend this facility full time for a block of around five weeks each year. Children also access the allotment site close to the school for a whole week, on a rota basis.
- The school continues to share the main site with a childcare provider which is inspected separately by Ofsted.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met the headteacher, the senior lead teacher and early years educators. Inspectors also met with seven members of the governing body and spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone.
- Inspectors spoke to some parents informally and considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in communication and language, mathematics and understanding the world. The inspectors visited adult-directed sessions and observed free-flow activities, scrutinised curriculum planning and talked to staff about the way these areas are planned and taught.
- Inspectors looked at children’s journals and at assessments undertaken by key workers.
- An inspector checked the single central record and met with designated safeguarding leaders to explore the school’s work to keep children safe. Inspectors also discussed safeguarding more widely, through discussions with other members of staff.

Inspection team

Chris Smith, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Asa Britton

Her Majesty’s Inspector

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