

Inspection of Hednesford Nursery School

Eskrett Street, Hednesford, Cannock, Staffordshire WS12 1AR

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 June 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Children grow and develop into curious and inquisitive learners in the special place that is Hednesford Nursery School. They live the school motto, 'We care, we learn, we grow together.' Children are happy and feel safe. They love attending the school and staff warmly welcome the children each day. Children flourish personally and socially.

Leaders are ambitious for children. They ensure that children get off to a good start in their learning. A careful balance of play and adult-led learning helps children to know and remember more. Staff ensure that activities are carefully matched to children's interests and needs. Adults 'fill the room' with conversation, songs, stories and rhymes. Children talk excitedly about favourite stories. However, children's knowledge of mathematical vocabulary and understanding of key concepts is not always secure.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. Leaders have high expectations of children's behaviour. They provide staff with regular training on how to help children behave well. This means that all children are treated respectfully, fairly and consistently. Staff teach children about how their behaviour can affect others. This in turn helps children to 'self-regulate' and manage their feelings well. Children are kind to each other. They learn the importance of taking turns and sharing.

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

Leaders and staff have created the calm atmosphere of nearby Cannock Chase Forest in the nursery. They have trained staff in a child-led nature-based learning approach. Children take part in lots of interesting activities, using and learning about many natural resources. Leaders have established clear and effective routines that help all children settle well. Children are supported by nurturing and caring adults. Leaders provide staff with the guidance they need to structure children's care, learning and development.

Leaders have designed an ambitious and well-planned curriculum. Children learn about people, animals and the world around them from an early age. Sensory activities such as squelching beans or exploring cornflour help them to communicate and socialise. Three and four-year-olds have fun creating music outdoors using sticks. The outdoor tree swing helps them to develop their upper body muscles. Children closely observe bugs and make bug homes. They write their names and mark make in the writing area. By collecting plastic waste from the sea-themed sand tray, children learn about sea pollution. Staff check children's learning each day and over time. They plan next steps for each child carefully. At times, however, staff newer to their role do not understand how the curriculum builds children's knowledge and understanding over time.

Leaders make sure staff are well trained to identify children's different needs. Staff provide effective support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These children are included in all aspects of nursery life. Parents and carers are positive about the advice and support they and their children receive. In all, children with SEND achieve well.

Staff sing songs and rhymes to children throughout the day. They use high-quality books to develop children's early reading skills. Younger children enjoy looking and pointing at picture books or board books. Older children learn about life under the sea by reading 'Tiddler' and 'Commotion in the Ocean.' Older children, that are ready, learn phonics and read books that match the sounds they are learning.

Every day, children learn about numbers. For example, children count fish as they catch them with their fishing rods from the 'sea tray.' They take away numbers while singing the rhyme 'ten in the bed'. This helps children learn to count with growing confidence. However, children's knowledge of key mathematical vocabulary and understanding of key concepts is not always secure. This is because of inconsistencies in how staff teach the mathematics curriculum.

The nursery staff provide exceptional opportunities for children's moral, social and cultural development. For instance, children broaden their understanding of the world on 'World Ocean Day'. They learn about other cultures through festivals such as Chinese New Year, Holi, Hanukah and Easter. They shared books during 'Dads and Dens well-being day.' They recently took part in 'wear the hat day' for childhood cancers. This helps pupils to learn about other cultures and celebrate the wider world.

Governors know what the school does well and what needs to improve further. They make regular checks on the work of the school. Staff are positive about the support they receive from leaders to manage their well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are vigilant. They prioritise the safety and well-being of all children. Leaders ensure staff are well trained so that they can keep children safe. Staff record and report any safeguarding concerns to leaders swiftly. Leaders work closely with external agencies to make sure that children in need of help get timely and effective support.

Leaders make sure appropriate checks on staff are undertaken before they start working at Hednesford Nursery School. They ensure the school site is safe and secure. Leaders are proud of their well-maintained environment and high standards of hygiene.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff do not implement the mathematics curriculum consistently well. This means that children's knowledge and understanding of key mathematical vocabulary and concepts is not always secure. Leaders should ensure that all staff know the most important mathematical concepts and vocabulary that children need to know and understand how to teach these well.
- At times, some staff who are new to their role do not understand how the curriculum builds children's knowledge and understanding over time. This means that pupils' learning does not build on what they have learned before well enough. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the detailed knowledge they need of the curriculum so that they can implement it well in all areas of learning.

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	123962
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10212253
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	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Lloyd
Headteacher	Kelly Bracebridge
Website	www.hednesford.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, Rose Hill Nursery merged with Hednesford Nursery school.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 carried out deep dives in literacy (taking into account communication and language), mathematical development and physical development. These included visiting sessions, looking at children's work, examining curriculum guidance and talking with children and staff. They also looked at work from a sample of other areas of learning.
- Inspectors watched reading sessions and children reading independently. They reviewed reading resources.

- The lead inspector looked at a range of documentation on the school's website.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding arrangements. This included examining the record of employment checks on school staff.
- Inspectors observed children's behaviour during the day.
- During the inspection, inspectors had formal meetings with the executive headteacher, the nursery school manager, curriculum leaders, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, the designated safeguarding lead and governors.
- Inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, the pupils' survey and the staff survey.

Inspection team

Lorraine Lord, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Karen O'Keefe

Ofsted Inspector

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