

Inspection of an outstanding school: Northfleet Nursery School

140 London Road, Northfleet, Gravesend Kent DA11 9JS

Inspection dates:

19 July 2022

Outcome

Northfleet Nursery School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children delight in coming to this wonderfully vibrant and nurturing community. Each day, confident and independent children cannot wait for Nursery Lane to open. They relish the wealth of exciting and fascinating learning experiences that await them, both inside and out. For instance, children climb and play in the magnificent treehouse, fish for 'jewels' and sing songs in different languages.

Leaders' expectations of what children can achieve are exceptionally high. Children are inquisitive and enthusiastic learners, who concentrate well at all times. They behave extremely well. Any unkind behaviour is dealt with swiftly. Staff are excellent role models and are highly attentive of all children's needs. Relationships are warm and supportive, and everyone is welcome. In particular, staff provide first-rate support to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Children feel safe and are very well looked after. They show kindness, friendship and support to each other. Children learn to recognise their emotions and talk about their feelings. They empathise with others. Children thoroughly enjoy playing together and understand the importance of turn-taking and sharing. Children flourish at Northfleet Nursery School. They are extremely well prepared for their move to primary school. As one parent said: 'We couldn't have asked for a better start to our children's learning and education.'

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

Leaders, governors and staff are highly ambitious for all children to develop a lifelong love of learning and achieve highly. Staff's commitment to ensuring that children get the very best start to their education shines through. They are extremely knowledgeable about how children learn and develop. Staff are expert at identifying and adapting the provision to make sure that all children thrive and achieve highly.

Leaders have designed an exciting and engaging curriculum. Across the seven areas of learning, the curriculum is exceptionally well crafted and coherent. Staff are clear about the knowledge and skills children are expected to learn and remember well. They provide carefully chosen activities and resources that foster children's natural curiosity about the world around them. Children use resources confidently and take risks safely. They are highly motivated, responsible learners who try hard and persevere when they find things difficult. For instance, children show great resilience when practising riding tricycles. They also focus attentively when using tweezers to pick up small objects. As one child said: 'Using the tweezers to pick up things makes our fingers stronger to write.'

Prioritising children's communication and language skills is at the heart of the school's excellent work. Listening to traditional tales, singing songs and rhymes play a key part in developing children's vocabulary and nurturing their love of reading. Leaders ensure that children get a superb introduction to letters and the sounds they make. Children excitedly choose to make marks to represent writing and many older children sound and write simple words independently. Children also learn Makaton to help them to communicate, and some use picture cards to help them express themselves. Consequently, all children, including those with SEND, share their ideas and feelings confidently and in detail.

The promotion of children's wider development is exceptional. Children learn about different lifestyles, beliefs and religious celebrations such as Diwali and Eid. They take part in a range of trips, including visiting the zoo and the gurdwara. Children talk animatedly about their recent visit to the LV21 boat, where they produced artwork on migration of birds around the globe. They are proud to have had their artwork displayed in the local area. Children gain a strong knowledge of the community. For instance, they regularly make collections for the local food bank. Children also delight in growing their own potatoes and watercress, which they use to make sandwiches.

Highly skilled governors play a key role in maintaining the high quality of education. They support leaders and hold them to account for the impact of their actions. Staff appreciate and praise the way that leaders care about their workload and well-being. Staff morale is sky high. They are extremely proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Vigilant staff ensure that safeguarding is given the highest priority. They are well trained and use this knowledge effectively to spot the early signs that children might need help. Staff are clear about the procedures for reporting concerns about children's welfare. Leaders follow up any issues swiftly and sensitively. They diligently keep detailed and comprehensive safeguarding records. Close partnerships with parents and carers, and an understanding of the local community, help leaders and staff to get families the help they need. Leaders ensure that all necessary checks are made on adults to ensure that they are suitable to work with children.

Background

When we have judged 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 September 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	118229
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10211282
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paranie Sivachandra
Headteacher	Neerasha Singh
Website	www.northfleetnursery.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Northfleet Nursery School is a maintained nursery school with provision for two- to five-year-old children. Children attend either part time or full time.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed.
- The school has a higher-than-average proportion of children who speak English as an additional language.
- The school currently uses one alternative provider.

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 with the headteacher, school leaders, staff and children.
- Inspectors met with two governors, including the chair of the governing body. They also spoken with a representative from Kent local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in: communication and language, physical development and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited classrooms and outdoor learning areas, spoke to staff and talked with children.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and the additional free-text responses. An inspector had informal conversations with some parents.

Inspection team

Louise Walker, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Francois Walker

Ofsted Inspector

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