

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Great Coates Village Nursery School

Station Road, Great Coates, Grimsby, Lincolnshire DN37 9NN

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Inspection date:

11 October 2022

## **Outcome**

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

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

Leaders have high expectations of children. They have established a caring and friendly school where children get off to a great start with their education. Children are happy to come to school and attend well. Staff make use of the school's grounds to help pupils to learn about the world around them. Children learn rhymes and songs. They take great delight in joining in with the stories that adults read to them.

Pupils behave exceptionally well because staff take time to teach them what is expected. Strong, trusting relationships between staff and children help them to feel safe. Because of this, children feel confident to ask questions and explore their thinking with adults. Children look after one another well; they learn how to share and be a good friend.

Parents and carers are supportive of the school. They feel confident that children are nurtured and well looked after. Leaders work hard to ensure that children learn about their community. Children participate in community activities, such as the scarecrow hunt. Regular visitors from the community, such as a local dentist and firefighters, help children learn about people who help us.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum. They have set out the important knowledge and skills that children should learn. Flexibility exists within the planned curriculum to follow children's interests. For example, while learning about harvest, children showed an interest in spiders. Staff capitalised on this to develop a spiderweb activity to help pupils develop the muscles in their hands to prepare them for holding a pencil.

Leaders undertake frequent research into the most effective teaching methods. They lead training for staff to ensure that they are well prepared to support children's learning. Staff mix taught sessions with carefully planned activities to help children practise and apply new learning. Staff check that pupils are making progress but sometimes these checks are not closely matched to the taught curriculum. This means that if a child has not remembered an important piece of knowledge, staff can miss this.

The development of communication and language sits at the heart of the curriculum. Leaders have carefully planned the books, rhymes and songs that they want children to learn. Adults read books to children that link to the topics they are learning about. Staff do so with great enthusiasm, using objects to bring stories to life. Children take delight in joining in with repeated phrases while adults read stories to them. Leaders have identified key vocabulary that they want children to learn. Adults skilfully weave these words into taught sessions and activities in the classroom and encourage children to use them.

Through the personal, social and emotional development curriculum, staff help children to develop empathy for one another. This work is woven into other aspects of the curriculum. For example, when reading 'Owl Babies', staff asked children to reflect on how the chicks feel when their mother is not there. Staff teach children about the impact of their behaviour by asking pupils to consider how other children feel. This helps the school to be a calm place where children get on well together.

Leaders ensure that pupils develop an understanding of the world. Staff talk about the places that children go on holiday and hunt for these on a map. The forest school enables pupils to explore the natural world. For example, pupils make bug hotels and learn about different ecosystems. Within the planned curriculum, children learn about religious festivals, such as Diwali, and cultural celebrations, such as Chinese New Year. These experiences help children to develop an awareness of people who are different to themselves.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Staff identify these pupils quickly and get the help of external agencies, such as a speech therapist, when needed. Adaptations, such as the use of images to tell children what is coming next, help children with SEND to learn alongside their peers.

Staff are proud to work in the school. They feel well supported by leaders. Staff appreciate the time that leaders provide to look after staff's well-being.

Governors are supportive of the school. Recently they have focused on strategic aspects, such as the school's finances. Their work to hold leaders to account for other aspects of the school's work has not been as effective as it could be. While governors do visit the school, they do not share what they have found in the detail they should. This means the governing body does not have the knowledge it needs to provide robust challenge to school leaders. Governors have not taken action to rectify some aspects of safer recruitment that needed to be addressed quickly.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff have the knowledge they need to identify if a pupil might be at risk of harm. Staff report their concerns quickly. Leaders take appropriate action and make thorough records of the steps they have taken to ensure children are safe. Leaders have made sure the school site is safe and checked regularly. The arrangements for drop-off and pick-up time are well organised.

While appropriate checks of staff who work in the school are undertaken, leaders' knowledge of safer recruitment, as outlined in Department for Education statutory guidance, is not as robust as it should be. School leaders have not had safer recruitment training.

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

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

- The checks of children's learning sometimes do not match the planned curriculum well enough. This means that staff might not notice if children have not remembered the important knowledge identified in leaders' plans. Leaders should make sure that assessment aligns with the taught curriculum.
- School leaders do not have the knowledge they should about safer recruitment. Some staff appointments have been made without leaders fully understanding the processes for safer recruitment. Leaders should undertake safer recruitment training so that they understand how to recruit staff safely.
- The governing body has not provided robust oversight of some of the school's organisational functions and educational performance. As a result, the governing body has not held leaders to account for some aspects that need to improve, such as the processes around staff recruitment. The governing body should ensure that it provides effective oversight and challenge to school leaders for the educational performance and organisational aspects of the school.

## **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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in February 2017.

## **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.

## **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>	117697
<b>Local authority</b>	North East Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211429
<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	41
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Chris Storr
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Bate (Acting Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.greatcoatesnursery.com">www.greatcoatesnursery.com</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	14 and 15 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school's headteacher left in December 2021.
- An acting headteacher has been in post since January 2022.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## 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 acting headteacher and the school's assistant headteacher. Inspectors met with a group of governors, including the chair of governors. An inspector also met a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into these areas of learning: communication and language; understanding the world; and personal, social and emotional development. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, spoke to staff, visited lessons and talked to children about their work.

- Inspectors scrutinised documents related to safeguarding and spoke to the school's designated safeguarding leader.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and spoke to parents informally on the playground.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.

### **Inspection team**

Tim Scargill-Knight, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Richard Jones

His Majesty's Inspector

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