

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Whitnash Nursery School

Nursery Lane, Whitnash, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV31 2PW

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Inspection date:

8 March 2023

## **Outcome**

Whitnash Nursery School continues to be an outstanding school.

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

Leaders and governors say that Whitnash Nursery School 'recognises and values the uniqueness of every child'. They are absolutely right. Staff are proud to work here and share a passion for providing every child with an excellent start to education. Parents and carers greatly appreciate the commitment of staff, how they care for children and how they 'go above and beyond' what is needed.

Staff focus extensively on children's emotional health and well-being. As a result, children love to come to school, are happy, and enjoy the exciting activities they do.

All adults at Whitnash have high expectations of what all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can achieve. They get to know each child very well and meticulously plan activities to help them learn. Despite being so young, children at this school are developing into independent, confident and resilient learners. They are very well prepared for their next school.

Children behave well. If there is any unkindness or poor behaviour, adults are skilled in helping children to understand and resolve problems. The school is a calm and highly purposeful learning environment. Bullying is not tolerated. Staff are quick to notice and analyse behaviours which indicate bullying might occur. This is highly effective in minimising such incidences.

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

Leaders and other staff have designed an ambitious, high-quality and exciting curriculum. Every decision they make is based on a secure understanding of how young children develop. For all areas of the early years curriculum, leaders have set out clear sequences and expectations. Staff know and understand these very well.

When children join the school, leaders make visits to home settings and work closely with parents. They also work alongside other professionals, such as a child psychotherapist.

This helps them gather a detailed view of children and to identify any needs they have. This attention to detail ensures that all children, including those with SEND, achieve the best possible outcomes.

With current children in mind, adults consider and refine every detail of provision. They are very skilled at assessing how well children are learning, and using this information to plan next steps. This means that if children fall behind in any way, adults quickly support them to catch up. There is nothing at this school which is left to chance.

Developing children's communication and language is a priority here. The school has adopted a very consistent and effective way of making sure there are high-quality interactions between adults and children throughout the day. Because of this, children listen attentively and are confident when talking to others. Adults share well-chosen books regularly. This extends and promotes children's vocabulary. Children love the stories they hear.

Carefully selected visitors help bring learning to life. These include musicians and puppet shows, and even a visit from a farmer with their animals. Other visitors, such as police officers and health visitors, help the children to gain an understanding of the world around them. Leaders have ensured children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts. A resident artist and a 'music and movement' teacher are in school every week to work with children. As a result of this, children are confident to express their ideas and demonstrate a real 'have a go' attitude to all things creative.

Teachers use resources well to enrich learning. Children have seen chicks hatch, grown their own food and are always fascinated by what is in the 'curiosity cube'. Adults encourage them to be physically active throughout the day. They make good use of the climbing equipment to show off their coordination, balance and control.

Children show independence from a young age because of clear expectations and well embedded routines. For instance, they hang up their own coats on arrival and settle instantly to activities such as choosing a book to share with a friend or practising their numbers with an adult.

This school is exceptionally well led at all levels. Leaders are hugely knowledgeable about early education. They provide training and guidance that ensure staff are experts too. Staff feel valued and are proud to work here. Leaders and governors make sure that the workload of staff does not become excessive. They have made deliberate choices that have reduced teacher workload without weakening provision.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

This school is a safe environment for children. Leaders ensure they train all staff to become experts in confidently identifying when young children need early help or are at risk.

The curriculum and the learning environment are carefully planned, so that children learn to be safe and to take managed risks.

Adults know the children well and know what to do if they have safeguarding concerns. Safeguarding leaders act promptly to deal with concerns and work effectively with other agencies to keep children safe.

Leaders always ensure new staff are safe to work with children by carrying out all necessary checks.

## 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in November 2012.

## 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>	125487
<b>Local authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10257044
<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	99
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Alison Paveley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rachel Gillett
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.whitnashnurseryschool.org.uk">www.whitnashnurseryschool.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school works in a federation with another nursery school in the local authority. The executive headteacher and governing body oversee both settings.
- The school caters for two-year-olds in its 'nurture nursery' provision.
- The school offers places of up to 30 hours for three- and four-year-olds.
- 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 school leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, who is also the special educational needs coordinator, and the nursery teacher.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in communication and language, physical development and understanding the world. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to

leaders, visited sessions and observed continuous provision, scrutinised curriculum planning and talked with staff about the way these areas are planned and taught.

- Inspectors met with two governors and spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the school gates and reviewed responses to Ofsted Parent View and staff survey.
- Inspectors met with leaders about the school’s safeguarding procedures. They reviewed policies and records relating to safeguarding and spoke with staff about pupils’ safety.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school’s improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings, a range of policies and information on the school’s website.

### **Inspection team**

Gareth Morgan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Gail Peyton

Ofsted Inspector

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