

# Inspection of McMillan Nursery School

Railway Street, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 9AG

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Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

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

Children eagerly run into McMillan Nursery School each morning. Parents, carers and children are welcomed with a warm and friendly smile.

Children feel safe and settle quickly in a supportive learning environment. Staff have their best interests and welfare at heart. Children benefit from the nurturing relationships that the staff provide. They trust the staff to care for them when they need comfort or reassurance.

Leaders expect all children to do well. This includes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children love to play and learn in the well-equipped classrooms and the inviting outside space. By the time that they leave the nursery, children are well prepared for their next steps in education.

Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour. Children learn how to be kind, considerate and well mannered. Adults will step in quickly if children need help and guidance. Any signs of bullying or unkindness are dealt with quickly.

Staff offer children a wide range of experiences and seek to create moments that children will never forget. At the time of the inspection, children and parents alike beamed with amazement when the Easter bunny arrived at their Easter egg hunt activity day.

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

Since the last inspection, McMillan Nursery School has been through a time of upheaval and change. However, the school has been turned around rapidly. The current leadership team has had a tremendous impact on improving the school swiftly and effectively.

Leaders have created an ambitious curriculum for all children. They are committed to ensuring that every child, including children with SEND, is provided with a strong foundation for their future education.

The curriculum is well designed. Leaders have thought carefully about what they want children to learn and in which order. The key knowledge that staff must teach to children is clearly set out in each area of learning. Children achieve well.

Teachers are knowledgeable about most areas of learning that they teach. Where delivery is strongest, adults deliver the curriculum consistently well. Occasionally, some adults are not as confident as others at teaching a few areas of learning. Where adults are not as confident, children do not learn as much as they could.

Teachers offer plenty of opportunities for children to revisit and recap important learning in adult-led activities and in free play. Children develop their confidence to

try out new and challenging activities. Adults successfully use assessment to establish how well children are learning the curriculum.

Two-year-old children are well catered for in the provision. Staff build strong, trusting relationships with children, many of whom have SEND. Well-thought-out activities enable all children in this age group to get off to a positive start. Staff successfully encourage the youngest children to count, to play, to explore their environment and to enjoy the stories that they hear.

Leaders have established a strong thread of communication and language throughout the curriculum. For many children, English is not their first language. Adults encourage children to respond in words and sentences that are appropriate to their age and stage of development.

The sharing of stories and rhymes and the singing of songs are popular and prominent parts of the day. Children can successfully retell a story with props and play the parts of the characters in a book. This helps them to remember the events and order of the stories they read and practise newly acquired vocabulary. Older children begin to learn the initial phonetic sounds of words, such as in their names, and how to orally blend simple sounds to make words.

The provision for children with SEND at McMillan Nursery School is a growing strength. Staff are particularly effective at quickly identifying children with SEND. They use their knowledge of each child well to put just the right strategies in place to make sure that children and families get the support that they need. Children with SEND succeed alongside their peers and participate fully in the same exciting curriculum.

Children behave and play together well. They are happy to share and take turns. They love to collect pebbles in a jar for being spotted demonstrating the school's values and behaviours. When the jar is full, children and adults delight in celebrating by singing and dancing to 'Agadoo'.

Leaders, governors and staff are passionate about their school. They have particularly supportive and strong relationships with parents. Governors hold leaders fully to account for their work to improve the curriculum. Staff feel well supported with their workload and well-being and are proud to work at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that everyone working in school understands the important part they play in keeping children safe. Leaders and staff are well trained in safeguarding procedures. Staff are effective advocates for children and are confident to report their concerns. They are vigilant in looking for indications that children could be at risk of harm.

When safeguarding needs are identified, leaders engage well with external agencies to get timely support for children and their families.

Leaders ensure that children learn about different risks in a way that is appropriate for their age and their developmental understanding.

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

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

- Occasionally, a small number of adults are not as confident as others at teaching a few areas of learning. Where this is the case, some children do not learn as well as they could. Leaders should continue to deliver training to adults so that they have the knowledge and confidence to deliver all areas of learning equally well.

## **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>	119095
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268263
<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	66
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ruth Thompson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Cathy Stokes
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.mcmillan.lancsngfl.ac.uk">www.mcmillan.lancsngfl.ac.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	11 and 12 July 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since, the last inspection in July 2019, a new headteacher and senior teacher have been appointed. The headteacher took up post in September 2020 and the senior teacher in September 2022. The majority of the present governing body were also appointed after the last inspection.
- The school offers provision for two-year-old children.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 these subjects: early reading; communication and language; mathematical development; and physical development. For each

deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teaching staff, looked at samples of children's work, observed children and spoke to some of them about their learning.

- An inspector talked to children about their favourite books and stories. The inspector also observed children sharing a story with an adult.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, who was also the designated safeguarding lead, and the senior teacher, who was the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors held discussions with members of staff, which focused on the well-being and safeguarding of children.
- An inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- An inspector also spoke to two representatives of Lancashire local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including those relating to school improvement, safeguarding and the checks carried out on newly appointed staff.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. They also spoke to children throughout the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Sue Eastwood, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Victoria Burnside

Ofsted Inspector

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