

Inspection of an outstanding school: Martenscroft Nursery School & Children's Centre

33 Epping Street, Hulme, Manchester, Lancashire M15 6PA

Inspection date: 28 March 2023

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. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children are happy and eager to learn at this friendly nursery school. They enjoy a variety of learning opportunities, which staff provide to encourage children's independence and curiosity. Staff are nurturing and care deeply for the children. Children are safe.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for children's behaviour and their achievements. Children know what staff expect of them and are eager to please. Classrooms are inviting, and staff successfully spark children's interest in learning. For example, children were delighted to go outdoors to re-enact a story that staff had read to them. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well.

Children are well behaved. They learn to share and to take turns with their friends. Leaders and staff deal with any issues of bullying immediately. Children learn about some of the similarities and differences between themselves and other people. For example, they find out about the different festivals that people celebrate. This helps children to respect differences.

Children benefit from exciting activities and events. For instance, they relish opportunities to develop their large-muscle and coordination skills during weekly visits from a local football coach.

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

Leaders have taken recent steps to further improve the design of the curriculum. They have ensured that the curriculum is ambitious, rich and balanced, and that it helps children to build on what they already know and can do. In most areas of learning, leaders have identified the important knowledge that children should learn. However, in one or two areas of learning, leaders are less clear about the essential knowledge that children should know and remember. This means that children are not building their knowledge and skills as well as they could.

Staff understand how young children learn. Leaders have fully included staff in the redevelopment of the curriculum. Staff choose the activities that are most suited to deliver the curriculum. However, in some areas of learning, leaders have not made sure that staff access the training they need to deliver the curriculum well. As a result, children do not achieve as well as they should across all areas of learning.

Staff support children with SEND well. They prioritise the early identification of any additional needs. Leaders work effectively with parents/carers and external professionals to support these children well. As a result, children with SEND access the full range of learning experiences.

Leaders prioritise developing children's communication and language skills and their love of reading. Stories, rhymes and songs are an important part of each school day. Staff animatedly read stories to children. Children listen with interest when staff read and discuss non-fiction books. This helps to enhance children's understanding of the world. Children are well prepared for learning to read with accuracy in the Reception Year.

Children try their best during small-group work and during times when they can play and learn independently and among their friends. This includes children in the provision for two-year olds. Generally, children concentrate well and listen to instructions from staff. On occasion, when staff deliver the curriculum less well, some children lose interest in what staff are trying to teach.

Leaders make sure that the curriculum supports children's personal development. Children have a strong sense of belonging. They benefit from experiences that give them the knowledge and skills to develop into responsible citizens. For example, children joined staff and parents on a trip in the local community, where they collected litter. They enjoy visits from local artists when they join in with art activities.

Governors are long serving and are committed to fulfilling their roles. They provide challenge and support to leaders and staff, with a focus on continually improving the education for children. Leaders prioritise the well-being of staff. Staff report high levels of morale. They value the support that leaders provide, both professionally and personally.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that the school has a strong culture of safeguarding. They prioritise the safety and welfare of children and their families. Leaders make sure that staff training is up to date and that staff know how to keep children safe and protected from harm. Staff understand the referral procedures to follow should they have concerns around children's welfare or the conduct of a colleague. Leaders work well with external agencies.

The premises are safe and secure. Children learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about road safety and stranger danger.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In one or two areas of learning, leaders are still refining the content of the curriculum. They have not identified precisely what children should learn and when. This hinders how well some children acquire and build on their knowledge and skills. Leaders should finalise their curriculum thinking so that staff know what to teach and when.
- In some areas of learning, leaders have not made sure that staff have the knowledge and expertise to deliver the curriculum as well as they should. This means that children do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that staff receive further training so that they can deliver the curriculum well.

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 July 2014.

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

Unique reference number	105384
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10256231
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	101
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elaine Bates
Headteacher	Amy Davenport
Website	www.martenscroftnurseryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision for children.
- The school provides educational provision for two-year-old children.
- The school has a separate registration with Ofsted, on the Early Years Register, for provision for children aged below two-years old.
- The school offers a before- and after-school club for children.

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 this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, physical development and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders and

visited a sample of lessons. They spoke with teachers and with some children about their learning. Inspectors looked at samples of children's work.

- The lead inspector observed some children sharing a book with a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed how children behave around the school, including during lunchtime.
- Inspectors reviewed school policies and procedures relating to safeguarding. They scrutinised documentation, including the single central record and training records. Inspectors discussed safeguarding with governors, leaders and staff.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders of the school. The lead inspector met with governors. He also held a telephone call with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's parent questionnaire, Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors met with some parents at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. They spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

David Lobodzinski, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Maria McGarry

Ofsted Inspector

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