

Inspection of an outstanding school: Arlesdene Nursery School and Pre-School

Blindman's Lane, Cheshunt, Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire EN8 9DW

Inspection date: 4 May 2023

Outcome

Arlesdene Nursery School and Pre-School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children love attending Arlesdene Nursery and Pre-school. They delight in the learning and play opportunities they are given. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well and are exceptionally well prepared for their next stage of education.

The nursery school is a harmonious place to be. Children are safe and play well alongside each other. Bullying is exceptionally rare. Children are taught to express their emotions using words or symbols. They have close relationships with their key workers. Gentle reminders help children to make the right behaviour choices.

Children and their families are all known very well by staff. The individual care and attention for each family is clear. This is a school where everyone is valued, included and encouraged to be the best they can be.

Opportunities to find out more about the wider world happen each day. Visits from the farm, using 'Picture News' and understanding why we brush our teeth are typical types of learning that children enjoy and remember. Families are invited into school regularly to share books and learn about each other's home languages and interests.

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

Leaders and staff have designed an aspirational curriculum, which takes children through small, logical steps to meet learning goals that successfully prepare them for the next stages of their education. Leaders ensure that provision is well matched to children's stage of development. As a result, children sustain concentration for lengthy periods of time and achieve very well.

Staff use every opportunity to make each teachable moment count. They have had training on how to ensure interactions benefit all children, particularly those who are

non-verbal or children who speak English as an additional language. Real-life experiences, such as putting on a family picnic to learn about the king's coronation, bring learning to life and make it memorable.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Children are immersed in opportunities to act out and retell stories. Staff ensure that props and new vocabulary are introduced and explained. The curriculum and school culture support children to ask questions, be curious and notice changes in their environment. Staff skilfully model and revisit previous learning to ensure children make meaningful links.

Leaders ensure that staff have the expertise to identify any children with SEND promptly. They constantly check that the curriculum and provision in each room is meeting the needs of children with SEND. Leaders have developed an exemplary provision specifically for children with complex SEND. This enables children to access the same curriculum as others in a smaller and calmer environment. Children's individual needs are balanced with the opportunity to work alongside a small group of children and adults.

Children learn how to share and behave well through taking note of the positive role models around them. Adults sensitively intervene, when necessary, to enable all children to be independent and safe. Children listen and respond well to clear explanations about what is happening and why. Behaviour while children are eating their lunch is exemplary. Staff ensure that children with complex SEND have the correct support to eat and successfully socialise alongside their peers.

Leaders ensure that children celebrate different faiths and customs in a way that makes sense to them. All children benefit from the real-life experiences throughout the year, such as watching duck eggs hatch and viewing the cocoon of a caterpillar.

The newly appointed members to the governing body have ensured that robust monitoring and challenge is in place to check on leaders' actions. Alongside this, governors are mindful of the support that leaders and staff need to do their job well. Staff unanimously report that they are proud and happy to work at the school.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the care and education their children receive. Typically, parents comment: 'the support received for my child has been amazing' and 'staff are caring and very skilled'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff understand their responsibilities to keep children safe. Staff notice the smallest changes to a child and report any concerns they have. Leaders are quick to respond and put suitable support in place. Referrals to outside agencies, such as health and social care, are timely and appropriate.

Information is shared with parents and children about keeping safe, including online. Pupils have daily opportunities to talk to familiar adults. Children who are pre-verbal use signs and symbols to express how they are feeling.

Those responsible for governance have a suitably strong oversight of safeguarding systems within 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 on 8 and 9 March 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

Unique reference number	117066
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10212482
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	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Matthew Brown
Headteacher	Claire Cobain
Website	www.arlesdene.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 and 9 March 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Arlesdene Nursery School and Pre-School admits children from the age of two-years old.
- The school provides a breakfast club for the children attending the school.
- Leaders do not make use of 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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding leader, and special educational needs coordinator, the senior teacher and the pre-school leader. The inspector also spoke with a school improvement partner from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in three subjects: communication and language, mathematics and personal, social and emotional development. For each deep dive, the

inspectors spoke to leaders, visited lessons, spoke with staff, spoke with children and viewed children's work.

- The inspectors viewed a range of documents, including governor meeting minutes and safeguarding records.
- The lead inspector met with the chair and representatives of the local governing body.
- The inspectors spoke to parents during the school day. They also considered the 31 responses made by parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 16 responses to Ofsted's free-text facility.
- The inspectors took account of the 25 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey. The inspector spoke to a range of children throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Isabel Davis, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Katherine Douglas

His Majesty's Inspector

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