

Inspection of a good school: Pastures Way Nursery School

Pastures Way, Luton, Bedfordshire LU4 0PE

Inspection date: 21 April 2023

Outcome

Pastures Way Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Each child is warmly greeted as they arrive at school. As soon as they hang their coats on their pegs, they are eager to begin their learning. Children are busy creating, exploring and investigating. Every adult wants the best for every child. Children are happy in this caring and nurturing environment.

Children are friendly with one another. They understand turn-taking. Staff support children to be thoughtful of each other. 'Kind hands, walking feet and listening ears' help children to understand how they should behave. Staff are always on hand to support children if they become upset. Any concerns are quickly resolved.

Staff encourage children to be purposeful in what they do. They have high expectations of what children can achieve. Children waste no time focusing on the activities adults have thoughtfully planned. Through adults' patient guidance and careful questioning, children explore their ideas and imagination. Staff ensure that all children, including those with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) flourish at the nursery. Children are well prepared for their primary schools. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. As one parent commented, 'This is a great nursery that puts children first.'

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

The school has experienced recent changes in staffing, including leadership. Leaders have made changes to make learning more exciting for children. They ensure that staff are receiving the training they need to teach their curriculum well. Staff consider that they are well supported in their work. This contributes to a strong team approach where everyone is willing to learn from one another.

Leaders have set clear goals for what they want children to learn and remember. Leaders' curriculum plans are ambitious. They provide staff with the information they need to support children in their learning. In a few areas of learning, leaders' curriculum plans are

still new. Adults are not fully confident in using them to deepen children's learning experiences. For example, in mathematics, focused sessions and adult interactions promote children's understanding of number. However, this is not built on through children's independent play.

Adults give high priority to developing children's communication and language skills. Staff use open-ended questions skilfully. They invite children's responses and engage them in conversations as they play. Children learn basic signing that supports communication, particularly for children with SEND. Staff introduce children to new vocabulary and consolidate the meaning of words through play. In one activity, for example, children explored the effects of pouring warm water on ice. Adults encouraged children to use terms such as 'melt', 'cold' and 'warm' as they played.

Leaders have thought about the books they read with children. Children enjoy using books placed around the environment. They develop an awareness of sounds by sharing and listening to stories and rhymes. Some children start to learn about phonics in an age-appropriate way.

Staff understand children's individual needs, including those children with SEND. Adults make regular checks about how well all children are learning and developing. They use this information effectively to change their plans. This helps children to practise skills and secure their understanding. Those children with complex needs receive tailored support. They actively participate and learn alongside their peers. The needs of children with SEND are well met.

Children at Pastures Way behave well. They understand and use clear routines that are well established. This means children focus on their learning because there is little disruption.

Children learn about the differences between themselves and their families. They learn about other cultures and celebrate religious festivals. At 'Pupil Parliament' time, children reflect on what they have found out through their day. They learn how to express their views and listen to the opinions of others. Children take part in trips and events in the local community. The Lewsey Festival is a highlight where staff, children and parents come together to share their learning.

Governors ask leaders questions to check that the nursery is running well. They ensure that staff are well supported and understand how to fulfil their roles effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that children's welfare has the highest importance. Regular training keeps staff's eyes sharp to any concerns. Staff are careful to notice any changes that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm. Leaders share their concerns to ensure that parents receive timely support when they need it. Leaders work closely with external agencies to help keep children safe.

Leaders' safeguarding records are well maintained. All employment checks are assiduously carried out. Governors make regular safeguarding checks to ensure that the work of leaders is thorough.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum changes made by leaders have been recently introduced and some practices are new to staff. This means that in a few aspects of the curriculum, leaders' intent is not having the full impact on deepening children's learning and development. Leaders should ensure that staff have the guidance and support they need to develop their practice effectively.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 good in September 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	109423
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10255158
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	134
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dr Nina Biscoe
Headteacher	Jo Iddenden (executive headteacher)
Website	https://pastureswaynursery.com/
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of a federation with the Gill Blowers Nursery School. This was formed in April 2022. They share an executive headteacher, a deputy headteacher and a single governing body.
- The executive headteacher was appointed in the substantive leadership role in January 2022.
- The school receives additional funding from the local authority to admit up to 24 children with complex learning needs.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that to account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and mathematics. For each

deep dive, inspectors held discussions with leaders, visited a sample of classroom activities, spoke with staff and looked at children's learning records.

- Inspectors met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also held a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documentation, including information about the approaches and procedures to safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered 15 responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including the 14 free-text responses. One inspector also spoke with some parents as they arrived at school with their children.
- Inspectors considered 29 responses to the online staff survey as well as speaking to staff during the inspection. Inspectors spoke to children as they learned and played.

Inspection team

Steve Mellors, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Katherine Douglas

His Majesty's Inspector

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