

Inspection of a good school: The Kingsdown Nursery School, Lincoln

Kingsdown Road, Doddington Park, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN6 0FB

Inspection date: 4 May 2023

Outcome

The Kingsdown Nursery School, Lincoln continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This friendly, welcoming school is like one big happy family. Children are thriving because staff show great care for them. Children say that they feel safe. They like that staff quickly sort out any problems.

Staff have the highest expectations for all children. They have created a calm and purposeful learning environment. They know how to maximise the children's learning. Children fully engage in the activities. They take delight in their learning. Staff tailor every interaction so that the children flourish.

Staff prioritise children's personal development. Staff take every opportunity to model good manners. They use their knowledge of the children to keep them focused on their learning, both inside and outside the building. Children are independent. They know how to help themselves to water. They know to wash their hands before eating. Children behave very well.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They value the strength of relationships between school and home. One parent, typical of many, said: 'My daughter loves going to school. The children are always welcomed when they arrive with big smiles by the staff. They are very encouraging to the children.' Parents like that their children are safe and that staff are approachable.

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

Leaders provide high-quality learning for children. The curriculum is personalised to meet children's needs. Communication and language development are at the heart of the school's curriculum along with a sharp focus on children's personal development. Most of the curriculum is set out clearly and teachers know what to teach and when. Leaders are refining some curriculum areas to ensure that the important knowledge children need to acquire is clearly identified.

Staff's interactions with children are of high quality. They identify key vocabulary and then use it repeatedly to reinforce it. For example, at the campfire, children repeat the names of vegetables. Other children readily join in with stories and rhymes. For example, children say: 'Run, run as fast as you can! You can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man,' when asked about the traditional tale. Staff repeat spoken sentences with accurate grammar if children make errors.

Leaders know how children acquire mathematical knowledge. Number and pattern feature significantly throughout the learning environment. For example, children independently count the number of pictures of wild animals on a page. Other children know the total number of sides on two-dimensional shapes without counting. Children describe buckets of sand as half-full or full.

Staff use their knowledge of each child's needs to plan activities linked to children's development. On occasions, leaders have not identified in sufficient detail the important knowledge that children in the early years need in preparation for future learning. This means that teachers are not always clear how children's learning builds securely over time.

Leaders have introduced systems to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They quickly identify what children need to thrive at school. Children with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Staff sensitively provide close care and support. Nothing is left to chance. Children with SEND achieve well.

Leaders provide children with opportunities that extend beyond the academic curriculum. They make careful choices about the visitors and trips that children experience. Children speak knowledgeably about festivals in different world religions. For example, children readily recall making diva lamps to celebrate the festival of Diwali.

Staff make sure that the learning environment is very engaging. They establish routines from the moment children join the school. Established routines and nurturing relationships make for a settled learning environment. Children know what is expected of them. They are a credit to the school.

Leaders work very well with staff. They consider staff's well-being and workload. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the leaders and the support they receive. Staff are proud to work at this school. Governors and representatives of the local authority know the school well. They understand the school's strengths and collectively tackle areas of improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders provide regular training for staff and governors. Staff know how to spot children who may be at risk. They pass on concerns promptly. Leaders support children's welfare. They work well with external agencies to

provide additional help when needed. Record-keeping is detailed. Governors regularly check the school's safeguarding procedures.

Leaders build strong relationships with families. They know the children and their families well. Parents say that they feel well supported and know where to seek help. Leaders make sure that vulnerable children and their families receive the help that they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not identified in sufficient detail the important knowledge that children need in preparation for learning as they move through the school. This means that teachers are not clear what earlier knowledge children have secured before they introduce new concepts. Leaders should ensure that the early years curriculum identifies this important knowledge so that children can embed earlier learning and build securely on what they know.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2013.

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	126562
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10211573
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	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Cathy Latimer
Headteacher	Kate Marnoch
Website	www.kingsdownnurseryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 October 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, curriculum leaders, the leader with responsibility for the provision for pupils with SEND and teaching and support staff.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language; personal, social and emotional development; and understanding the world. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders and spent time observing in the classrooms. This included observing the quality of the interactions between staff and children, and the daily routines that staff have established. Inspectors also talked to staff and children and observed activities to determine the impact of the curriculum and teaching methods on children's learning, development and well-being.

- One inspector spoke with parents. Inspectors met with governors. A meeting took place with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance and behaviour.
- One inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. He considered the safeguarding policy, training records and examples of safeguarding concerns.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also considered the responses to the staff survey and the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Damien Turrell, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Emma Tayler

Ofsted Inspector

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