

Inspection of a good school: Hetton Lyons Nursery School

Four Lane Ends, Hetton-le-Hole, Houghton Le Spring, Tyne and Wear DH5 0AH

Inspection date: 23 May 2023

Outcome

Hetton Lyons Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

School leaders have created a family-friendly atmosphere. Relationships between staff, parents and carers, and children are highly positive. Parents value the work of staff and the experiences that they create for the children. One parent commented, 'I have always been confident my children have been cared for in a nurturing environment and given the best possible start to education.'

Leaders establish clear and consistent behaviour expectations. Children of all ages show exemplary behaviours. They follow the routines that they have been taught. Children independently choose their own snacks. They look after equipment and tidy up after themselves. Children are considerate of others. They play well both alongside and with their peers. Staff are skilful in dealing with upsets and mishaps. With support from adults, children learn to deal with any differences of opinion.

Children enjoy spending time in the exciting outdoor area. Here they sing along to the karaoke machine and venture into the 'forest school'. They work together to make their own trim trails from wooden planks, spools and crates. Children have regular opportunities to develop skills and to explore new things. The activities that adults set up for children have a learning purpose.

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

Leaders ensure that the curriculum is ambitious and extends children's understanding of the world around them. Staff plan together, and then record this in their planning journals. They select activities which promote all seven areas of learning while considering children's interests. This method of planning works well for most areas of the curriculum. However, in mathematics, the delivery of the curriculum is sometimes disjointed. There is not a clear enough sequence of learning. Some aspects of mathematics are being taught before some children have a firm enough grasp of prior learning.

Staff skilfully involve children in reading. They use stories and songs with lots of rhyme and repetition. Children join in by saying the repeating lines. They excitedly say what is going to happen next. Adults encourage children to think about the books by asking questions. This helps them to check that the children have understood what has been read.

Leaders use every opportunity to develop children's language skills. As a result of their training on developing children's vocabulary, staff have thought about the vocabulary needed for different activities in the nursery. They have created 'vocabulary bags' filled with resources, for example whisks and sieves to help children learn the names of these items when cooking.

Staff are effective in identifying children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure that external professionals, such as the health visitor and speech therapist, give tailored advice. Individual support plans provide clear targets which identify the small steps of learning for each child. Provision for children with SEND meets their specific needs. Leaders make sure that older children with SEND are well supported in their transition to their new schools.

The support for children's personal development is impressive. Leaders ensure that children are introduced to fundamental British values. They learn to respect each other, and this is extended to respecting other people. Children visit the nearby sheltered accommodation and talk with the older generation. They also visit the local war memorial and take part in Remembrance activities.

Children are encouraged to explore nature in the outdoor area, through visits to local parks and at 'beach school'. Children love visiting the beach and finding out more about rock pools and the shoreline. This leads to further activities in school as staff respond to the children's natural curiosity. For example, children talk about environmental issues and design posters about litter.

Staff are proud to work at Hetton Lyons Nursery School. They appreciate the support leaders provide to manage their workload. Staff speak positively of the strong team ethos in the school. The governing body holds senior leaders to account. Governors are reflective of their own practice and have plans to further strengthen the work of the governing body.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

A senior leader manages all aspects of safeguarding well. She is available during the school holiday periods and keeps in touch with families who need support. There are clear procedures in place to make sure no child is at risk. High-quality external training for staff ensures that they understand how to identify and report any concerns quickly.

Children learn about road safety when on their many visits to places nearby. They also learn about sun safety. They collect their sun hats on their way out to play. Staff encourage children to think about positive and negative risks when playing outside.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum intent is clear. However, underlying curriculum guidance which supports this is not sufficiently well developed in some areas, such as mathematics. As a result, some staff have difficulty in articulating what is in the curriculum and in making sure that this hierarchical subject is well sequenced. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is well defined for all areas of the provision and that staff have training in the sequencing and delivery of early mathematics.

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 April 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	108750
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10241877
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	1 to 4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	89
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nora Waugh
Headteacher	Ailsa Higgins
Website	www.hettonlyonsnursery.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Hetton Lyons Nursery School is part of the House Federation of schools, with Oxclose Community Nursery School and Usworth Colliery Nursery School.
- The headteacher at Hetton Lyons Nursery School is also co-headteacher at Usworth Colliery Nursery School.
- There is a new single governing body in place for the federation of schools.

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, the lead teacher, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: communication and language, mathematics and physical development. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to the lead teacher, spent time observing daily routines and activities, spoke to staff and observed children at different times of the day.

- Inspectors also met with leaders to discuss the provision for pupils with SEND and procedures for monitoring children’s behaviour and attendance.
- To judge the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record of recruitment checks and held a meeting with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors met with staff to check their understanding of safeguarding and the impact of any training received.
- Inspectors met with parents at the end of the day. Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey.

Inspection team

Mary Cook, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Andrew James

Ofsted Inspector

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