

# Inspection of an outstanding school: West Exe Nursery School

Cowick Street, Exeter, Devon EX4 1HL

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Inspection date:

6 July 2023

## **Outcome**

West Exe Nursery School continues to be an outstanding school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Children thrive socially, emotionally and physically at West Exe Nursery. Staff care deeply for the children. As a result, children feel safe and are happy.

Children are excited to start school in the morning. They relish the opportunities that the nursery provides. Children use the grounds well in all weathers, to explore and build independence. Children move seamlessly from independent play to group activities with their key person.

Leaders have high expectations of children's behaviour and learning. As a result, the behaviour of children is exemplary. Children are polite and kind to one another. At the school café, children wait patiently before choosing their fruit, saying please and thank you.

Children learn to look after themselves and the environment. For example, children learn about the importance of protecting the environment through visits from the local zoo. They also learn about the richness of culture from their local community. Community members visit the school to share and celebrate their cultures and religions.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the education their children receive. Comments such as, 'a wonderful nursery' and 'inspiring staff' were typical. All parents who responded to Ofsted's Parent View would recommend this nursery school to another parent.

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

Leaders are extremely ambitious for all children. They have designed an exceptional curriculum to meet children's needs. Staff capture the interests and imagination of children. They know children and families well. As a result, children are highly engaged and enthusiastic learners.

Children learn to love stories. Staff bring stories alive through animated storytelling. Children avidly listen to traditional nursery rhymes and songs, such as 'Incy Wincy Spider'. They are excited to join in and repeat familiar phrases. Children role play characters from stories to recall their learning. They have access to a wide range of books that reflect the rich diversity of their local community.

Staff consistently model high-quality language to broaden children's knowledge and understanding. Staff skilfully question children to develop their thinking. Staff use different communication strategies as needed, such as Makaton and flash cards, to communicate effectively with all children.

Staff routinely identify opportunities for children to learn mathematics. Children enjoy counting objects and adults are quick to repeat and reinforce children's understanding. Children learn to weigh items on scales, developing an understanding of mathematical language, such as heavier and lighter. Staff check children's learning and development. As a result, staff know when children need extra support.

Leaders are knowledgeable about special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They ensure staff have the expertise to carefully adapt learning. Staff sensitively engage children to support and develop their interest. As a result, children with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes.

Staff are excellent role models. They teach children how to be kind and respectful. As a result, children follow routines and expectations well. Children move sensibly and independently from one activity to another. Leaders have created an environment where children take risks safely. Children climb trees, ride trikes and enjoy the challenges of the monkey bars. Children support each other well.

Children learn to share and take turns. They enjoy using their senses to explore resources, such as play dough and gloop. Leaders have prioritised building children's independence. Children of all ages apply their own sunscreen and put on their own coats. They learn to be good friends to one another. Children show empathy and understanding to characters in stories.

Leaders are reflective and consider how to innovate teaching to improve children's experiences. Leaders take steps to reduce staff workload. Staff receive high-quality training that develops their expertise. They are proud to be a member of staff at the nursery school. They feel appreciated by leaders.

Experienced governors have a strong understanding of the nursery school. They support and challenge leaders. Governors share the ambition of leaders and they are proud of the opportunities the nursery school provides the local community.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong safeguarding culture. Regular training for staff ensures staff are quick to identify and report safeguarding concerns. Safeguarding records are robust.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe.

When leaders have safeguarding concerns, they are persistent in ensuring children and families receive the best possible support to keep children safe. Where necessary, leaders challenge outside agencies to ensure everything possible is done to keep children safe.

Leaders make sure that all adults are safe to work with children.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the nursery 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 February 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	134674
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240287
<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	158
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	David Simpkins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Baker
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.westexenurseryschool.org">www.westexenurseryschool.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	30 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The nursery lead teacher is Katharine Pringle.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school operates its own nursery provision for two-, three- and four-year-olds.

## 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 the designated safeguarding lead, checked the single central record of adults working in the school and looked at safeguarding records.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the nursery lead teacher and the special education needs coordinator.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in communication and language, physical development and expressive arts and design.
- The inspectors observed children's behaviour in group time and around the school.

- The inspector gathered parents' views by considering the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and by talking to parents before and after school. The inspector also evaluated responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

James Gentile, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Marie Thomas

His Majesty's Inspector

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