

Inspection of Forefield Community Infant and Nursery School

Forefield Lane, Crosby, Liverpool, Merseyside L23 9SL

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 September 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and feel safe at this school. They gain much new knowledge because the school has high expectations for what they will learn. Pupils are well prepared for their future learning and ready to take on new challenges.

Pupils learn to act kindly towards other people. They know how to behave themselves. In classrooms and along corridors, even on a wet and rainy day at school, pupils act sensibly. They are proud and excited to represent their school when they meet with visitors, such as inspectors.

All pupils profit from the impressive range of extra-curricular clubs that the school provides. Pupils develop their skills in tag rugby, archery, dance, hockey and much more. They appreciate the extra opportunities, such as being a school monitor or a physical education champion, to support other pupils.

Staff encourage pupils, for instance, to act like 'perseverance penguin' or be rewarded for 'eagle effort'. Pupils can become a 'lightning learner' or be recognised for being like 'mindful mystique'. Staff use these and other fictional characters that they have created to help children and pupils to feel good about themselves and to prosper.

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

The school has worked effectively to develop an interesting and worthwhile curriculum in each subject. It provides pupils with activities and information that inspire and enthuse them about learning. The school ensures that pupils' activities are full of talk and the learning of new words. Pupils also develop their knowledge of the local area of Crosby, including the beach and the Rimrose Valley.

The school acts thoughtfully to meet the needs of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff identify pupils' individual needs quickly and accurately. They also include each pupil in lessons and in the many activities that the school provides. This helps pupils to feel valued and respected, and to achieve well.

Mostly, pupils thrive at the school and develop a secure foundation of knowledge on which they can build. However, on occasion, pupils do not understand some of the key information that they need to know. This is because some of the school's curriculum does not identify clearly enough some of the smaller steps in knowledge that pupils need to learn.

Teachers draw successfully on their expert subject knowledge when delivering the curriculum. Staff spot pupils' mistakes and misconceptions when supporting the learning of pupils, including pupils with SEND. They adjust their delivery of the school's curriculum in response.

Staff in the Nursery class support children skilfully to become confident talkers and communicators. Teachers and teaching assistants in the Reception Year and in key stage 1 build on this successful work when teaching pupils phonics. They give pupils who struggle to read the support that they need. This means that pupils master the basics of reading quickly and securely.

Pupils benefit from using the high-quality, well-arranged libraries in their classrooms. Mostly, teachers use books with pupils in different learning activities successfully. However, at story times, the school is sometimes less clear about the key knowledge that it will teach pupils. This means that some of pupils' learning about different authors and books does not build on what they already know.

The school makes sure that children in the early years learn to talk, cooperate and be active in the well-organised classrooms and outdoor areas. Staff help children to settle with ease when they start at the school. They build warm, supportive relationships with children, who adapt quickly to the school's routines. Staff give careful attention to supporting pupils with other significant changes, such as their later move to junior school.

Pupils focus their attention on the activities that staff provide. Staff teach lessons without significant distractions.

The school provides pupils with a well-considered programme of activities and opportunities to enrich their wider development. For example, staff introduce pupils carefully to the diverse world of Liverpool and of modern Britain. The school develops pupils' awareness of being a responsible citizen. Staff teach pupils to respect elderly people, such as by meeting with those living at a local care home. Pupils meet with the coastguard, as part of their learning about sensible behaviour at the beach.

Governors use their skills and knowledge well to support and challenge the work of the school. They make sure that the school is ready for its long-term future by making key decisions carefully.

The school provides staff with regular access to training, guidance and support that improves their teaching. It acts to ensure that staff have a reasonable workload. The school works effectively with parents and carers to explain the curriculum, such as through parental workshops about early reading. These opportunities and the wide range of information that parents receive from staff help them to support their children's learning at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some parts of the curriculum, the school has not pinpointed the fundamental knowledge that children and pupils should learn. Sometimes, pupils do not understand what they have previously been taught. The school should identify and teach pupils the essential small bits of knowledge that build into more complex understanding, so that pupils learn more successfully.
- Sometimes, the school does not fully consider the key knowledge that pupils will be taught at story times. This weakness limits some of pupils' knowledge of different authors and their works. The school should identify more clearly the knowledge that pupils will learn through staff's use of books at story times.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	104872
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	10256000
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	312
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Alex Walker
Headteacher	Beverley Roberts
Website	www.forefieldinfantschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	18 and 19 June 2009, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.
- The headteacher, chair of governors and two-thirds of the staff are new to the school since the previous inspection. At the time of this inspection, the new headteacher had been in post for two weeks.
- All Saints Children’s Ventures is located on the site and provides a breakfast club and an after-school club. It is separately registered with Ofsted and was not part of the school inspection.
- The school provides pupils with a range of clubs before school, at lunchtimes and after school.
- The school has recently reduced the annual intake of new children into the Nursery class to 46 places to allow for more flexible provision to be offered to families.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, they held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors discussed the curriculum in some other subjects with the school and with pupils.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to familiar staff. He spoke with some pupils about reading.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and asked them about their experiences of the school. There were no responses from pupils to the Ofsted online survey.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- The inspectors reviewed responses from staff to the Ofsted online survey. They spoke with some staff about their work at the school.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, some of whom attended the meeting remotely.
- The lead inspector spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record, took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Michelle Joyce	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Morris	Ofsted Inspector

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