

# Inspection of Grasmere Nursery School

Icknield Way, Luton, Bedfordshire LU3 2BT

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Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Requires improvement

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

Children are always busy learning at Grasmere Nursery. Upon their arrival each day, children are met with exciting activities. They quickly develop into confident and enthusiastic learners. Being safe and achieving well is important here. Children enjoy warm and nurturing relationships with adults. This means children are happy and feel safe.

Adults speak in calm voices that reassure children. They use positive prompts such as 'kind hands' and 'please walk' to support children's behaviour. Children follow simple instructions and know the routines of the day. They learn about being kind and respecting each other. Staff are quick to spot any child who becomes upset. They deal with these situations sensitively so that children can quickly return to playing alongside their classmates.

Children make the most of their time at the nursery. The environment provides opportunities for children to learn new things. They are eager to explore and be creative. Children love being outside in the school orchard finding out about the natural world. They enjoy looking after their school pets.

The school understands the important part parents and carers play in their child's development. They communicate their high expectations well. Parents are very happy with the education their children receive.

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

The school's curriculum is ambitious, helping every child to build their learning. It includes the Grasmere Grassroot Goals to help plan activities. Staff use them to identify sequences of small steps. This ensures that children achieve well. In a few areas of learning, the plans are too broad. This leads to activities lacking clarity in what children need to know. Children do not secure the skills quickly enough. For example, in physical development, the building of gross motor skills lacks precision. It relies on teachers' own knowledge to understand how this is further broken down.

Adults skilfully thread the Grasmere Goals through everything children learn and do. By revisiting these goals regularly, children successfully remember and practise key knowledge. For example, children grasped understanding of 'five' by making buns and counting caterpillars. Staff have a good understanding of how children are doing. They frequently discuss children's progress, making careful adaptations when needed. They identify those who require extra help. The school ensures that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those from the school's additional resource base, receive the support they need. As a result, children with SEND, including those with complex needs, make good progress.

The school carefully checks most aspects of the curriculum. However, some staff are new to their roles of responsibility. They are still developing their leadership skills.

This means that they do not fully understand how well children learn across all areas of the curriculum.

Communication and language development has a high priority. Stories and rhymes are a regular feature of the school day. Children share books while working on their activities. They hear and learn new vocabulary, modelled and encouraged by staff. For example, children talk in groups about important age-appropriate events such as the changing seasons. Children make use of the 'lending library' to share books at home and develop a love of reading.

The atmosphere of the school is calm and purposeful. Children are eager to learn. They share activities willingly and play harmoniously. They listen to adults and stick at their tasks. Different methods of communication, such as signing, help children to convey their feelings. Adults respond in effective ways to ensure that children engage positively in everything they do.

Children have a wide range of opportunities to enrich their experiences of the world. At home they complete 'culture wheels' to share information about their diverse backgrounds. They celebrate key events in the calendar, such as Black History Month. Learning about the environment is important. They build a sense of wonder at the natural world through use of the 'discovery shed'. Children visit the local community garden to plant and dig. They meet older residents at the local nursing home to share songs and stories.

Governors know the school well. They use the school's vision to ask questions of the school about how well it is being achieved. There is a close-knit team at Grasmere. Staff appreciate the way leaders manage their workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In a few areas of the curriculum, the plans are not sufficiently precise, hindering children's learning and development. This means that in these areas children do not fully secure their understanding as quickly as they could. Leaders should ensure that curriculum plans have sufficient detail so that staff use the programmes consistently and effectively to plan children's learning well.
- Some staff are new to their roles of subject responsibility. They have not fully developed the skills and knowledge to fully evaluate the impact of their curriculum plans. This means they do not yet know the refinements required to improve the quality of education provided across the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that all staff receive the training to carry out their roles of responsibility effectively.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109420
<b>Local authority</b>	Luton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10288416
<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	93
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Dr Mohammad Alramahi
<b>Headteacher</b>	Barbara Tewe
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://grasmerenursery.co.uk">grasmerenursery.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	15 and 16 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The site of the nursery school also includes provision for a baby and toddler unit as well as additional provision for children with profound and complex needs. This inspection report refers to the nursery school and the additional provision for children with profound and complex needs. There are currently 21 children attending the additional resource base for special needs.
- The current headteacher took up her post permanently in September 2022.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- There is a before- and after-school club that is managed by the governing body with a separate registration from the school.

## 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and governors, including the chair of governors. Inspectors also met with parents informally as they brought their child to school in the morning.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in communication and language, physical development, mathematics and understanding the world. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, spoke to teachers and early years practitioners and looked at a range of children’s work. Inspectors also observed children learning in classrooms and outdoors.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders and staff; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents through their responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to the Ofsted staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Steve Mellors, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Amy Luu

Ofsted Inspector

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