

Inspection of Fairfield Nursery School

Fairfield Street, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 0LD

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 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 | Outstanding |

What is it like to attend this school?

Children are happy at Fairfield Nursery School. They confidently say goodbye to their parents and carers each day. Children feel safe and trust the adults to look after them. The school motto, 'every bud deserves a chance to blossom', is at the heart of everything this school does.

Most children, including two-year-olds, achieve well. This is because the school has high expectations for every child, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Typically, children move on to primary schools ready for the next stage of their learning.

Children behave well. They are polite and well mannered. They proudly showed inspectors their favourite books and resources. Children take part in learning activities with confidence. They know that caring staff will help them to play and explore.

Children enjoy special activities, such as learning outdoors in the woodland area. They engage in creative activities, including painting, baking and sewing, with gusto. Children relish 'stay and play' sessions when their parents come along to take part in mathematics and art activities.

Children learn to care for living things, such as stick insects and butterflies. They benefit from educational trips and visits, for example picnics in the park, travelling by train to the seaside and learning about modelling clay with a sculptor.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum that meets the needs of all children, including two-year-olds and children with SEND. The curriculum identifies the key knowledge that children should learn and the order in which content should be taught. Staff have a well-informed understanding of the curriculum. They use this guidance, alongside their in-depth knowledge of child development, to provide children with learning activities suited to their needs, development and interests.

Mostly, staff successfully join in children's play, supporting and extending their ideas. However, many children are at an early stage of acquiring language and communication skills. On occasions during conversations, gaps in children's language or misconceptions go unchecked by staff. This means that some children do not have the opportunity to pick up the basics of language. They find it difficult to communicate with their friends and adults and to connect what they know to new learning.

Children's needs, interests and talents are known well at this school. There are effective systems in place to check children's learning and to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. For instance, staff use the two-year-old progress check of children's development to identify any early concerns about individual children.

This helps staff to adapt the delivery of the curriculum to help these children overcome their barriers to learning.

The school teaches children how to behave appropriately. Staff deal gently, but effectively, with children when they forget to be kind to one another. Children know that the school rules help to keep them safe.

The school has thought carefully about children's wider development. Children have the opportunity to try as many new activities as possible. This helps them to develop new interests. Children learn about diversity among people and families. They know that there are people in the community who can help them, such as people who work in the emergency services.

Governors provide effective support and challenge to the school. They are committed to the success of every child and check on the school's work to achieve this. Staff appreciate the steps that the school take to support their well-being and workload. When making decisions, governors are considerate of the impact on staff's workload.

The school provides detailed guidance for parents on how best to support their children's learning at home. For example, the school shares learning activity ideas through 'Family Fun Trails' in school as well as providing weekly home learning activities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not ensure that some staff engage in high-quality interactions with children. This means that some staff do not identify gaps in children's language knowledge well enough to help them overcome their difficulties in communication. The school should ensure that staff are suitably trained to identify and rapidly address gaps in children's communication and language knowledge.

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 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

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| Unique reference number | 119086 |
| Local authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 10255981 |
| Type of school | Nursery |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 2 to 5 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 59 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Diane Fielding |
| Headteacher | Sacha Walker-Byrne |
| Website | www.fairfield.lancs.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 23 February 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school offers provision for two-year-olds.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

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 second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher. The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of governors, and spoke to a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language and early reading, mathematics and expressive arts and design. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with curriculum leaders, visited a sample of classroom activities, spoke to staff and looked at children’s learning records.
- Inspectors also spoke with leaders about the curriculum in some other areas of learning.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and children; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children’s interests first.
- There were no responses to the Ofsted survey for pupils. Inspectors spoke with children and observed their behaviour as they played in the nursery.
- Inspectors reviewed documentation, which included leaders’ evaluation of the school’s strengths and areas for improvement and documentation relating to children’s behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke with some parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors also reviewed the responses to the online surveys for staff.

Inspection team

Victoria Burnside, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Sandra Hamilton

Ofsted Inspector

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