

Inspection of Oxhey Nursery School

Eastbury Road, Oxhey, Watford, Hertfordshire WD19 4RL

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 2023

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

The 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. The school received an ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Act on 9 November 2021. 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?

Children feel welcome, included and valued here. They come into school happily. They start each day confident that there will be fun and interesting things to do.

Children quickly develop strong relationships with their key workers and other adults in school. They know these adults care about them. Children ask for help when they need it. Adults give children the reassurance they need. They help children to manage tricky feelings. Children also grow in independence. They learn to dress themselves appropriately when choosing where to play. Routines are clear. Staff's consistent expectations help children learn to behave well.

Children are drawn to the stimulating activities set out each day, indoors and out. They love to dance to the wide range of music they hear. They play together kindly. They tend their garden with great care, growing strawberries, carrots and potatoes to harvest and eat. Children look carefully at nature, for example studying the bug hotel or autumn leaves. They start to concentrate well, ready for their next steps in school life.

Children develop their understanding of each other and their community. They sing at a local care home and visit shops and allotments nearby. The school welcomes families in to share their festivals and celebrations.

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

The school is ambitious to provide a curriculum that gives children the knowledge and confidence to succeed. Clear, shared principles underpin curriculum plans. These plans set out the small steps for each area of learning. Staff use these plans to meet the needs and interests of children. Staff identify the most important words and skills for children to learn. Occasionally, when putting these plans in place, adults miss opportunities to consolidate or extend ideas. This happens in areas of learning where staff are still developing their expertise.

All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn to sign from the start. This ensures that they can communicate any worries to adults, who swiftly intervene to help. Children with SEND get carefully planned support from skilful adults in small groups and alongside their peers. The school adjusts the curriculum well for children with SEND.

All children have many opportunities each day to enjoy stories, songs and rhymes. They sing enthusiastically. They clap and march to develop rhythm. Adults share books and encourage children to join in with refrains and to spot patterns in words. Over time, children develop strong foundations to equip them for reading.

The school works well to engage families. Parents and carers share stories with children in home languages. Communication systems are well developed. The school shares information each day to spark conversations at home. Regular catch-up calls

from staff support their partnership with parents. The school provides helpful videos and resource packs for parents. These enable families to understand what is happening in school and to support this at home.

Children are kind and friendly. They behave well. The school encourages regular and punctual attendance. It works with families to develop this so that children can benefit from playing and learning together. This also helps to develop good attendance habits ready for their next school.

Children develop their understanding of diversity. Children learn about important artists and musicians from a range of cultures. The school introduces children to many of the religions within their community.

The school provides a wealth of opportunities to inspire children's interests and aspirations. Visitors introduce children to the jobs they do. Children explore healthy eating by cooking in school and taking the recipes home to share. Staff encourage children to take plenty of exercise. Children learn how to stay safe online with clear messages reinforced in stories.

The strong team of governors has worked strategically to put the school on a secure financial footing and to develop expertise. Staff work as a close-knit team to share their good ideas to benefit children. Governors recognise the need to further develop the capacity and skills of middle leaders within the school.

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 subjects, where subject knowledge is weaker, staff sometimes miss opportunities to secure and extend learning. When this happens, children miss out on extra practice of new words and ideas. The school should continue to give staff the training they need to know all subjects well and adjust their teaching when required.
- Some subject leaders are relatively new to their roles. They are still developing their curriculum knowledge and support for colleagues. As a result, curriculum provision is not consistently strong in all areas. The school should ensure that subject leaders get the right training and support to carry out their roles 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

Unique reference number	117077
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10240728
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	65
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Patrick Aikman
Headteachers	Gemma Williamson and Hayley Yendell
Website	www.oeyc.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 November 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of a federation with two other nursery schools.
- The school provision includes two-year-olds.
- The school does not use any registered or unregistered providers of off-site alternative education.
- The school provides before- and after-school care on site.

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.
- 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 senior staff in the school, including the headteachers, the chair of governors and the designated leads for safeguarding. Inspectors also spoke with representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: communication and language, physical development, literacy and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions with leaders about the curriculum, visited classrooms, spoke with staff, spoke with some children about their learning and looked at some children's work.
- 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 children's interests first.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents , Ofsted Parent View. This included 12 comments from parents in the free-text facility. Inspectors also considered the 10 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lynne Williams, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Conor Heaven

His Majesty's Inspector

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