

Inspection of a good school: Ripley Nursery School

Sandham Lane, Ripley, Derbyshire DE5 3HE

Inspection date:

15 December 2023

Outcome

Ripley Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Ripley Nursery School aspires for all its children to develop positive attitudes in preparation for a 'lifetime of learning'. Highly skilled adults nurture, inspire and enable children to grow and learn. No limit is put on what children can accomplish, including for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The learning environment is warm and inviting. It sparks children's curiosity and imagination. Carefully planned activities stimulate children's interests. Children's learning is productive and purposeful. For example, children in the outdoor art studio consider how they can manipulate and change the materials they work with while they express their ideas and creativity.

Staff know and value every child. From the very start, they ensure that they understand each child's holistic needs. With patience, staff show children how to do things so that, over time, they become increasingly independent. Children's attitudes to learning are strong. They play together happily and cooperatively. They pay attention to and show interest in what others say and do.

A strong partnership with parents and carers is prioritised. As one parent commented, typical of many: 'The nursery provides such a warm, friendly home-from-home environment.'

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

Leaders have set out an ambitious, well-considered curriculum. The nursery school's 'goals' establish the end points. It is a curriculum that is in constant review. Where it does not meet the needs of the children, swift action is taken. For example, the school has provided staff with further training so that the music and art aspects of expressive arts and design (EAD) are taught well. This is having a positive impact on how children use vocabulary and express their ideas in creative ways. The school is planning to ensure that the curriculum for movement and dance is equally ambitious.

Adults have a deep understanding of how children learn and develop. They give children time to think for themselves and intervene at just the right time. Staff use opportune moments to talk to children about their work. Every moment is skilfully used as a learning opportunity.

The development of children's communication and language is prioritised, including for those with SEND. Those who are at the early stages of communication are supported with words, gestures, signs and symbols so they can make choices in their everyday lived experiences.

Books, words, songs and rhymes are common features of the learning environment. Staff seize every moment to share a story. Songs and familiar rhymes are integrated into daily routines. Children learn to tell and create their own stories. For example, children crafted their own version of 'The Stickman' story by changing the characters and events.

Children learn to make good choices in their behaviour. 'Listening Luke' presents children with a 'golden sunshine' for demonstrating 'good sitting and good listening ears'. Children follow the routines of the nursery well. This helps to create a calm environment. For example, children know that safety glasses should be worn when they learn in the woodwork area.

The school has carefully considered the knowledge and attitudes that children will need to thrive as healthy and caring members of their community. Great importance has been placed on learning outdoors. The school recognises that this helps children with their physical development and mental health. Children relish the opportunity to visit the local allotment, where they grow produce such as pumpkins, apples and strawberries. They use this harvest back in the nursery to make their own meals and snacks. Visits to the forest school help children to understand how to take risks in a safe environment.

Staff enjoy working at this nursery because together they make a 'good team'. They appreciate how governors enquire and support their workload and well-being. Governors ask leaders pertinent questions to ensure that the nursery school continues to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The movement and dance aspects of the school's EAD curriculum are not as well sequenced as other aspects of this area of learning. This limits how well children can communicate and express their ideas through dance and movement. The school must continue the work it has already started to ensure that all aspects of the EAD curriculum are well sequenced.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2018.

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

Unique reference number	112478
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10313219
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	113
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	James Benn
Headteacher	Cathy Bednal
Website	www.ripley-nur.derbyshire.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	17 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The nursery school does not use any alternative provision.
- Since the last inspection, a new chair of governors has been appointed.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgment about the quality of a school's educational 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.
- 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator.

- The lead inspector spoke with an adviser from the local authority and members of the local governing body. The lead inspector held a meeting to discuss how the early years pupil premium funding was used.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into the following areas of learning: communication and language, physical development and EAD. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders followed by observations of a range of activities in the nursery. They spoke with children and staff.
- Inspectors spoke with parents during the school day. They considered the views expressed through Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Shaheen Hussain, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Caroline Poole

His Majesty's Inspector

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