

Inspection of an outstanding school: Aspiring Foundations Federated Nursery Schools – Warrington Road Nursery School

Naylor Road, Warrington Road Childrens Centre, Widnes, Cheshire WA8 0BS

Inspection date: 23 January 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children are full of smiles when they arrive at this calm and caring nursery school. They are greeted by kind and nurturing staff. Children feel safe and happy. They trust staff to care for them, including when they need comfort or reassurance.

The school has high expectations for children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Most children achieve well. However, in some areas of learning, the school has not identified the specific knowledge that children should learn. This means that, sometimes, children do not have the opportunity to learn all that they should.

Children take part in learning activities with confidence. Staff help them to play and investigate in well-equipped classrooms and outdoor areas. Children proudly showed inspectors their favourite books and resources.

Children learn to play cooperatively. They share and take turns with their friends. On rare occasions when children find this difficult, staff gently and effectively remind them of behaviour expectations.

Children access a variety of educational experiences that enrich their wider development. They take part in outdoor activities, such as den building and playing hide and seek in a local forest. These rich opportunities help children to learn more about the natural world and to develop new interests.

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

Staff draw on their in-depth knowledge of child development to identify the additional needs of children with SEND quickly. They adapt the delivery of the curriculum so that these children learn alongside their friends. As a result, children with SEND typically achieve well.

Mostly, staff use assessment information effectively to determine what children should learn next. The school has reduced the amount of paperwork that staff collect when they make assessments of children's development. This gives staff more time to support children in their learning.

The school places a sharp focus on developing children's early reading skills. Children benefit from carefully chosen books, songs and nursery rhymes. Staff make story time interesting, such as by reading books with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Staff regularly check how well children are developing in their communication and language. They provide focused support for children who may be at risk of falling behind. In the main, staff successfully join in with children's play, supporting and extending their ideas and investigations. However, on occasions, some staff do not build children's knowledge and understanding through carefully considered, well-planned conversations. This hinders some children from learning as well as they could.

The school has recently started to refresh the curriculum. Overall, this curriculum thinking is successful. However, in some areas of learning, the school is still identifying the essential knowledge that children should learn. This means that, sometimes, staff find it difficult to design learning that helps children to gain important knowledge. Occasionally, this leads to gaps in children's learning that prevent children from building on what they already know and can do.

Staff skilfully and sensitively teach children expectations for their behaviour. Children, including two-year-olds, learn how to be kind towards others. They understand the importance of looking after equipment and enthusiastically help to tidy toys away.

The school supports children's wider development well. Children learn about diversity and different types of families. Visitors, including from the emergency services, talk to the children about their roles and responsibilities. This helps children to understand that there are people in the community who can help them. These meaningful experiences prepare children for life in modern Britain.

The school considers staff's workload and well-being, for instance how to best implement new initiatives without overburdening them. While governors are committed to the school, some have recently joined and do not have an accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities. This means that there are times that governors do not challenge the school well enough.

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 learning, the school has not identified the essential knowledge that children should learn. Staff do not emphasise and revisit some important ideas and concepts. This hinders how well some children achieve. The school should clarify the foundational knowledge that children should learn in each area of the curriculum.
- On occasions, some staff do not build children's knowledge through talking with them about their learning as they play. This means that some children do not learn as well as they could. The school should ensure that all staff make full use of opportunities to support and extend children's learning.
- Several governors are still developing in their roles. This means that the level of challenge that the governing body currently offers does not hold the school fully to account. Governors should improve their knowledge and skills so that they can effectively support and challenge the school to further improve the quality of education that children receive.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in October 2014.

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 | 110959 |
| Local authority | Halton |
| Inspection number | 10291405 |
| Type of school | Nursery |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 2 to 4 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 79 |
| Appropriate authority | Local authority |
| Chair of governing body | Alison Wright |
| Headteacher | Liane Johnson (Executive Headteacher) |
| Website | www.warringtonroadnurseryschool.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 10 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of alternative provision for children.
- The school provides places for children aged two years.
- The school has federated with another local nursery school. An executive headteacher and one governing body are responsible for both schools.
- Since the previous inspection, the executive headteacher and several other members of staff have been newly appointed to the school.
- A new chair of governors has also been appointed since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- 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 met with the executive headteacher. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language and early reading, mathematics and personal, social and emotional development. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with curriculum leaders, visited a sample of classroom activities and spoke with staff.
- 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 Ofsted’s survey for pupils to consider. 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 comments. Inspectors also spoke with some parents during the inspection.
- There were no responses to Ofsted’s survey for staff to consider. Inspectors spoke with staff during the inspection.

Inspection team

Victoria Burnside, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

David Robinson

His Majesty’s Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024