

Inspection of Cleator Moor Nursery School

Ennerdale Road, Wath Brow, Cleator Moor, Cumbria CA25 5LW

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 March 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Children are happy at this school. They play and explore in the indoor and outdoor areas with confidence. Children know that they can seek out comfort or support from caring staff. This helps them to feel safe and secure.

Children, including those in the provision for two-year-olds, behave well. They learn to share resources and take turns while they play. Skilled staff support children in resolving minor disagreements. Many children are able to talk about how they feel. This is because they learn the words to use to express their emotions.

The school has high expectations for children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, in many areas of learning, these aims are not realised. This is because the school has not identified the specific knowledge that children should know in these areas. This hinders how well children learn.

Children have the opportunity to try as many new activities as possible. For example, they take part in yoga and feeding lambs. Through stories and celebrations, such as for Diwali and Easter, children learn about diversity among people and families. They develop their understanding of fundamental British values, such as democracy, through voting for songs and rhymes. These experiences contribute well to children's broader development.

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

The school has recently taken decisive action to review and revise its curriculum. However, several of these improvements are too recent to have had an impact on how well children achieve.

In each area of learning, the school has identified the age-related milestones that it expects children to reach. However, in almost all of these areas, the school has not identified the important knowledge that it wants children to learn so that they know and remember more over time. Added to this, the school has not ensured that staff have the expertise to design activities that support children to learn well. Children do not learn all that they should.

In the main, staff successfully join in with children's play, supporting and extending their ideas. Many staff skilfully teach children how to communicate and how to listen well. However, at times, children do not learn as well as they should. This is because some staff do not engage in conversations with children to build their knowledge effectively.

Staff understand how children learn and develop. They draw on their knowledge to identify the additional needs of children with SEND quickly. The school seeks the advice of other professionals to provide appropriate support promptly. This helps children with SEND to access the same curriculum as their peers.

Typically, staff use assessment information effectively to determine children's future learning. The school has recently modified the way in which staff check children's understanding. Staff get to know what children know and can do without completing excessive paperwork. Staff appreciate that these changes have given them more time to support children's learning.

Due to staff's gentle support and guidance, children become keen and confident learners. Children understand the importance of looking after resources. They help to tidy toys away enthusiastically. Children in the provision for two-year-olds learn to share and cooperate with other children. They relish the rewards and praise that they receive for behaving well and for following the nursery's routines.

Visitors to school, such as the emergency services and road crossing officers, help children to learn that there are people in the community who can help them. They learn that rules, including road safety rules, are there to keep them safe. These opportunities help to prepare children well for life in modern Britain.

The school considers the workload and well-being of staff in the decisions that it makes. For example, it considers the impact of implementing new initiatives, to ensure that these do not cause undue workload for staff.

Governors are beginning to offer a greater level of challenge to the school. They now have more accurate information about the curriculum and how well children achieve. However, some of these improvements to governance are at an early stage, and the impact is unclear.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In most areas of learning, the school has not identified the important knowledge that children should learn. This makes it difficult for staff to ensure that children learn all that they need to be ready for primary school. The school should identify the specific information that children should learn across the curriculum and the order in which this should be taught.
- Staff are not provided with the support and guidance that they need to deliver aspects of the curriculum well. This means that children do not learn all that they should in some areas of learning. The school should ensure that staff have the training and guidance required to deliver all areas of learning effectively.
- Some staff do not capitalise on opportunities to deepen children's learning through carefully structured conversations. This means that some children do not learn the key vocabulary that they need to deepen their learning. The school should train all staff to support and deepen children's learning further.

- The governing body does not have a sufficient depth of understanding about the quality of education that children receive. As a result, governors have not supported the school sufficiently well to bring about improvement. Governors should ensure that they gain a clear oversight of the effectiveness of the quality of education and hold the school to account for its actions.

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	112088
Local authority	Cumberland
Inspection number	10268067
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of children	2 to 4
Gender of children	Mixed
Number of children on the school roll	53
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Des Morris
Headteacher	Charlotte Oddie (Acting Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.cleatormoornurseryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 April 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- At the time of this inspection, the school was being led by an acting executive headteacher, who has been in post since January 2024.
- The school provides early education for children aged two years old.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for children.

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 the acting executive headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.

- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language and early reading; mathematics; and understanding the world. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with curriculum leaders, visited a sample of classroom activities and spoke with staff.
- Inspectors also discussed 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.
- 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.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to consider to Ofsted's online survey for children.

Inspection team

Victoria Burnside, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sandra Hamilton

Ofsted Inspector

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