

Inspection of Usworth Colliery Nursery School

Manor Road, Sulgrave, Washington, Tyne and Wear NE37 3BL

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 May 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has been through a period of significant change since the last inspection. Leaders have acted quickly to improve the quality of education for children. Staff have high expectations of all who attend here. They support children to develop into confident and enthusiastic learners, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This ensures that children are well prepared for future learning.

Children receive a warm welcome from caring staff who help them quickly settle into daily routines. Children are happy and feel safe. They follow familiar routines extremely well. For example, children are proud to achieve the 'Zip Club' certificate for confidently putting on waterproofs and wellies with very little help.

Children behave exceptionally well. They form strong relationships with their key adults. Strong, nurturing relationships mean that children trust staff to help them. Children respect the differences between themselves and others. Children who need extra help to manage strong emotions are supported effectively by staff. This supports all children to access the full curriculum.

Children enjoy a range of experiences. They particularly enjoy learning outdoors. Children work collaboratively helping each other with activities such as planting vegetables. Children show high levels of respect for the natural world.

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

Leaders have designed a new curriculum. The curriculum is ambitious for all children, including children with SEND. The curriculum defines what children need to know and be able to do as they progress through Nursery. Staff assess children's starting points to identify gaps in knowledge and plan next steps. New learning is introduced in group sessions before being followed up to check children's understanding. Checks on the impact of the new curriculum are in the early stages. This means that leaders do not know the precise impact of the curriculum on children's learning.

Understanding the world is a particular strength. Staff make sure the outdoor area is organised with exciting activities to capture children's interests. Children concentrate for long periods of time on these activities. They demonstrate strong knowledge of the seasons, animal habitats and lifecycles. For example, children describe how 'birds come back from migration and animals come out of hibernation'.

The curriculum focuses on developing children's language and communication. During group-time sessions, staff skilfully model the language that they want children to learn. Most activities build on what children have learned before. This helps prepare children for what comes next. Staff plan the important vocabulary that they want children to learn for each area of learning. Children excitedly use new vocabulary to describe their experiences. Occasionally, children do not learn as well

as they should. This is because conversations with children do not build children's knowledge effectively at times.

Children benefit from frequent story and singing sessions. They enjoy joining in with stories such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' as the story becomes familiar. Older children recognise their name in written form. They know the letters in their name. Staff plan opportunities for children to develop early writing skills through mark making. This helps to prepare children for writing later.

The school works effectively with parents, carers and external professionals to identify and assess the needs of children with SEND. The support that children receive is informed by specialists such as speech and language therapists. The school ensures that children benefit from effective support to help them access all aspects of the ambitious curriculum. Many parents are highly complementary about the support the school provides for their children.

The curriculum promotes children's personal development well. Children understand how to stay safe when playing outdoors. They benefit from visits to a local park, library and museum. Children share and interact well with each other, sharing their discoveries. The school ensures that children develop confidence and resilience so that they are well prepared for the next stage in learning. Children's behaviour is exemplary.

Leaders, including governors, have improved the culture of learning in the school. They have supported staff to teach the new curriculum effectively. Leaders consider the well-being and workload of staff in the decisions that they make. Staff are proud to work in the school. Leaders and governors acknowledge that they have not reviewed their new curriculum in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the impact this is having on children's learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes opportunities to deepen children's learning, through carefully structured conversations, are missed. This means that children do not build on what they already know and can do as well as they should. The school must ensure that staff fulfil the expectations of the new curriculum and maximise interactions with children.
- Leaders, including governors, have not fully evaluated the impact of the new curriculum. They are unclear which aspects work well and which aspects need to be further refined so that children reach the ambitious outcomes they have set. The school must ensure that leaders, including governors, check that the

Nursery's curriculum is being implemented as intended and is supporting children to be ready for Year 1.

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	108749
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10297261
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	78
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nora Waugh
Headteacher	Ailsa Higgins
Website	www.usworthcollierynursery.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Usworth Colliery Nursery School is part of the House Federation of schools with Hetton Lyons Nursery School.
- The headteacher at Usworth Colliery Nursery School is also the headteacher at Hetton Lyons Nursery School.
- A new deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2023.
- Usworth Colliery Nursery School has provision for two-year-old children.
- Since the last inspection, a single governing body has formed for the federation of schools.
- The school does not use 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.

- 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, who is also the special educational needs coordinator, and deputy headteacher. The lead inspector held discussions with members of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language, physical development and understanding the world. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to leaders, spent time observing daily routines and activities, spoke to staff and observed specific children at different times of the day.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including the free-text comments that were submitted. An inspector spoke to parents to gain their views. Inspectors also took account of the responses to the staff questionnaire and gathered the views of staff throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Julie McGrane

Ofsted Inspector

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