

Inspection of an outstanding school: The Lawns Nursery School

Imperial Road, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 3RU

Inspection date: 2 July 2024

Outcome

The Lawns Nursery School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children thrive in this welcoming and inclusive nursery. As one parent commented, 'The school lays great foundations for education by instilling a love for learning, creativity and reading.' Sessions begin and end with familiar routines. This makes for a happy and settled nursery community. When children come in, they enjoy deciding which area to play in or choosing a book and relaxing on a beanbag to read peacefully. Before going home, children practise their yoga poses and sing well-known songs.

As children explore the indoor and outdoor areas, adults make the most of opportunities to help them consider what is safe and what is unsafe. Consequently, children are confident about how to look after themselves while playing independently, for example on the outdoor climbing frames or when using resources in the creative area.

Children achieve exceptionally well because of the ambitious curriculum leaders have developed. Staff know in detail what children must learn and take every opportunity to explain new vocabulary. The environment is bursting with inviting activities based on children's interests. Adults skilfully turn everything into an opportunity to learn the well-planned curriculum. Children are never far away from a book that adults share, skilfully making links to the curriculum and deepening children's learning at every opportunity.

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

The school sets highly ambitious goals for what children will learn before they leave the nursery. The precise and thoughtful way in which the curriculum is designed enables children's learning to build securely. For example, in physical development, children strengthen their muscles through yoga and by moving with ribbons and streamers. They have many opportunities to climb, jump, throw and catch in the school's well-developed outside area. Adults support children very well with developing their physical skills, such as through modelling and suggesting ways to use tools such as hammers in woodwork. They actively encourage children to challenge themselves and take risks on the larger equipment, inspiring them to practise so that they become physically confident. Engaging

activities, such as writing with large chalks and pens on giant paper on the floor, are planned deliberately. These prepare children well for developing finer motor skills, which they later strengthen as they use an increasingly more complex range of tools and resources. As a result of this deliberate approach to their development, children make excellent progress from their starting points in this and other aspects of the early years curriculum. Consequently, they are very well prepared for their key stage 1 learning.

Leaders have the same high expectations for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) as they do for all others. Children with SEND are exceptionally well catered for. Adults tailor activities and the environment so that pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as other children and achieve as well as they can.

Staff know children very well and build warm and supportive relationships with them. This underpins the highly effective way in which personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is taught as an integral part of the curriculum. Children respond exceptionally well to the school's high expectations for their behaviour. All staff use the same language for gaining children's attention and guiding them as they walk to group activities around the nursery. Staff teach children how to recognise their feelings and talk about them. They skilfully turn any instances where children disagree into opportunities to teach them how to take turns and resolve conflicts gently. The consistent language of 'recognising problems' and 'identifying solutions' is learned as children talk about stories. This language framework helps them to talk about the difficult situations they encounter in real life. Staff encourage children to work independently and be confident in their choices. As a result, children develop a healthy sense of identity and self-worth. Learning across other aspects of the early years foundation stage curriculum is equally rich.

The school ensures that developing children's spoken language underpins every area of the curriculum. Adults throughout the nursery consistently model the high-quality use of language in ways that children find irresistible. They constantly reinforce language, repeating precisely planned key words and using language to model activities. For example, while dressing dolls and teddies, children are encouraged to consider whether the clothes are 'too big' or 'too small'. They sing number ditties and nursery rhymes and act out counting. Adults skilfully bring stories and characters to life during children's play. As children build towers with large bricks, each child stands against it to see if they are taller or shorter. For example, they delight at being the wolf and the pigs from Little Red Riding Hood, rehearsing parts of the story and blowing the tower down.

Governors bring expert support to leaders' compelling vision for excellent early years practice. The school's deep knowledge of early childhood development benefits other settings that they share their expertise with.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	109758
Local authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	10321760
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	152
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gill Cocklin
Executive Headteacher	Sarah Cottle
Website	www.nurseryfederation.co.uk/lawns
Date of previous inspection	14 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

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.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator.
- Inspectors met with governors and spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: communication and language, PSED and mathematics. As part of the deep dives, inspectors talked to leaders about the curriculum, looked at curriculum documents, visited classrooms and outdoor

learning spaces, spoke with staff, spoke with some children about their learning and observed children learning, playing and interacting with staff.

- Inspectors also talked with leaders about children’s learning in other areas of the early years foundation stage.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record, reviewed safeguarding records and spoke to leaders, staff and governors. Inspectors considered how well the school manages safer recruitment and how they deal with allegations about adults.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school’s self-evaluation and school development plan.
- Inspectors reviewed responses to the parent survey, including 19 free-text comments. Inspectors spoke with parents as they dropped pupils off at school on the morning of the inspection.

Inspection team

Jo Brinkley, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Clare Vallence

Ofsted 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