

# Inspection of Hartcliffe Nursery School and Children's Centre

Hareclive Road, Hartcliffe, Bristol BS13 0JW

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| Inspection dates:         | 1 and 2 October 2024 |
| The quality of education  | <b>Good</b>          |
| Behaviour and attitudes   | <b>Good</b>          |
| Personal development      | <b>Good</b>          |
| Leadership and management | <b>Good</b>          |
| Previous inspection grade | Inadequate           |

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

At Hartcliffe Nursery School, children treasure the moments they spend with staff. Each day starts with dedicated adults greeting children with smiles as they arrive. This welcoming start sets a positive tone for the day ahead. Parents and carers wholeheartedly agree. Most describe the school as caring and supportive.

Staff seize every opportunity to develop and enrich children's learning. During 'welcome time', children happily sing, count and share their feelings. At 'tidy up time', children work as a team to put resources away. Staff use this time to develop children's understanding of mathematical language, such as 'behind', 'next to' and 'under'.

Children are safe and behave well because they know what staff expect of them. Well-established routines and engaging activities mean that children become confident and independent learners. Staff are closely attuned to children's needs and interests. They know when to step in with extra guidance and support, including for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Meal and snack times provide a valuable social experience. Adults act as positive role models. They encourage children to try new foods. Children learn to use cutlery and know why it is important to recycle any waste.

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

The interim headteacher has been the driving force behind the school's rapid improvement. Along with dedicated senior leaders, they lead with a moral purpose for the benefit of children. Much thought has gone into shaping the curriculum. It now clarifies the knowledge and skills that children need to acquire at different stages. The school rightly prioritises the prime areas of learning to secure children's basic skills.

Communication and language are at the bedrock of the school's curriculum. Staff know their crucial role when interacting with children. They skilfully weave storytelling, songs, poetry and counting throughout the school day. For example, children eagerly retold the story of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff' and confidently acted out the 'Chop Chop' poem. Staff repeat key words and numbers to help children understand their meaning. They use pictures and symbols so children with limited communication skills can learn alongside their peers.

The school is still developing staff expertise in a few areas of learning. Subject-specific guidance to support staff in teaching these areas is recent. This means that some adults lack the confidence to teach these areas of the curriculum as well as the others. Therefore, children do not build their knowledge as securely as they do in the more established areas of learning. Furthermore, at times, some adult interactions do not consistently extend children's speech and language. The school has firm plans to improve these areas.

Knowledgeable staff liaise effectively with expert professionals. This ensures that children with SEND get the right support from the start. The school uses checks at age two to plan specific provision, such as speech and language therapy. Effective use of 'daily working boards' helps staff to check and inform the next steps in children's learning.

Children show many effective learning characteristics. For example, in 'review time', they readily take turns and listen to others. In play, children demonstrate kindness and share resources, such as brushes and building blocks. The school's clear and consistent routines help create calm spaces, where children can focus on their learning.

The school values children's wider development. A range of experiences foster children's curiosity and respect for others. These include celebrating religious festivals, exploring musical instruments and spending time outdoors in the nature area. Children learn to work independently, for example, when choosing snacks and pouring drinks. They know which foods are good for them and the importance of brushing their teeth.

Governors work with the school effectively. They frequently check that the school's actions are making a tangible difference to the children. A strong spirit of teamwork and camaraderie exists. Staff buy into the vision and the collective drive to raise standards to provide the best for the children.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school does not ensure that all staff consistently engage in high-quality interactions with children. When this happens, children do not develop or extend their speech and language as well as they could. The school need to ensure that all staff have the expertise to develop children's language acquisition.
- In a few areas of learning, the school is in the early stages of providing staff with subject-specific guidance to develop their knowledge and expertise. Currently, some staff lack the confidence to teach all areas of learning equally well. As a result, children do not build their knowledge as securely as they do in the more established subjects. The school should continue to focus on developing staff's knowledge and confidence to teach all parts of the curriculum so that children make a strong start in all areas of learning.

## 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 108906   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Bristol City of  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10344436   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Nursery  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Maintained   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 2 to 5   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 211  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Holly Antonana   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Cate Peel (Interim headteacher)  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.hartcliffenursery.co.uk">www.hartcliffenursery.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 3 and 4 July 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005                 |

## Information about this school

- Following a period of local authority commissioned support to the school, the interim headteacher joined the school in October 2023.
- The chair of governors started in September 2022.
- The school includes provision for two-year olds.
- 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. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector

is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

- 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 held discussions with the interim headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and other school staff. The lead inspector met with representatives from the governing body, including the chair. He also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of learning sessions, had discussions with staff, spoke to some children and looked at examples of children's learning.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in physical development and literacy.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: met the designated safeguarding lead; checked the single central record of adults working in the school; took account of the views of staff; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.
- Inspectors observed children's behaviour during learning sessions and continuous provision in both the indoor and outdoor environments.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to discuss how the school supports their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation provided by the school. This included school improvement priorities, policies, behaviour records, information about children with SEND and records of governors' monitoring.
- The team inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. They also considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

## **Inspection team**

Dale Burr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tonwen Empson

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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