

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Ashmore Park Nursery School

Griffiths Drive, Ashmore Park Estate, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV11 2LH

Inspection dates:

8 October 2024

Outcome

Ashmore Park Nursery School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children are happy and well cared for in this welcoming school. They arrive with a smile and are keen to explore both the outside and inside areas. The school is ambitious for children's learning. By the time they leave the school, children achieve well across much of the curriculum.

The school's rules 'be kind' and 'be a good listener' are reflected in the way staff and children treat each other. Children are kept safe. Staff help them to settle quickly at the start of each day and are always on hand to help. Children are well mannered and supportive of one another.

Children benefit from experiences that enrich their learning and wider development. A puppeteer, for example, helps to bring stories to life. During a visit to an outdoor adventure centre, children show courage as they walk on a rope bridge and try out a zip wire. The curriculum encourages children to learn through practical first-hand activities. For instance, they enjoy learning about the natural world by growing, harvesting and cooking vegetables.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. One parent, representative of many, commented, 'All of the staff have the welfare and education of the children at their heart.'

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

The school wants the very best for the children. Leaders, staff and governors are always looking for ways to improve children's experiences. The school curriculum engages children by using effectively the outdoor environment, stories and themes. For example, children enthusiastically sorted leaves and conkers by size, and counted the number of legs on a spider. Some explained how trees shed their leaves, while others spoke knowledgeably about the autumn.

In the main, the curriculum helps children to build secure foundations for future learning. As a result, children are well prepared for their move to primary school. In a few areas of learning, the precise knowledge that children should gain has not been clearly identified. As a result, some of the planned activities do not focus enough on the knowledge and skills the children need. This means that children may not know and remember key knowledge securely.

The school fosters a love of reading and books. Children enjoy listening to and joining in with stories and rhymes. Across the curriculum, children successfully develop their vocabulary. This is because staff make sure that children hear and use relevant words. Groups of children, for example, excitedly talked about the textures and colours of the pumpkins they had grown.

Staff listen carefully to what children say. They ask searching questions to assess children's understanding and to extend children's learning. There are occasions when the questions some staff ask are not as helpful as they could be in finding out what children know.

Children who need extra help, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are supported effectively and prepared well for their next steps. The school quickly identifies the support children need. Children receive the right support and at the right time. The school works closely with parents and external professionals to help children access everything the nursery has to offer.

Staff have high expectation of children's behaviour. Children live up to these expectations and behave well. Children are polite, they listen carefully, and know how to take turns. There are many opportunities for children to develop their independence and resilience. Children confidently take part in different activities. This is because they are not afraid of having a go and making mistakes. Children learn to look after themselves, for example when using the climbing equipment outside.

Children benefit from a broad range of opportunities that support their wider development. They learn about other faiths and cultures. This prepares the children well for life in the wider world.

Leaders and staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate that governors consider the impact of any decisions on their workload and well-being. Staff value the training they receive and the positive culture that leaders promote.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some areas, the curriculum does not identify precisely what children are expected to know and remember. As a result, some activities are not sharply focused on what children need to learn. The school should ensure that the curriculum identifies the essential knowledge that children need to know so that children learn as well as they could.
- Staff use of questioning is inconsistent. This means that gaps in children's understanding are sometimes missed, and children's learning is not moved forward as quickly as it could. The school should support staff to develop their questioning strategies further.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in February 2015.

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	104279
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10343800
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	46
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Lacey
Headteacher	Jane Parocki
Website	www.ashmoreparknurseryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher, assistant headteacher and chair of governors have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school is federated with Phoenix Nursery School.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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, inspectors met with the headteacher and the assistant headteacher. They also met with the chair of the governing body and the local authority school improvement advisor.

- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons and spoke to children about their learning.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders and 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 met with staff and also considered the views expressed through the Ofsted staff survey.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of parents and took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Usha Devi, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sally Noble

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