

# Inspection of Bentilee Nursery School

Dawlish Drive, Bentilee, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST2 0HW

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|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Inspection dates:         | 8 and 9 July 2025 |
| 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 | Outstanding       |

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

Children are very happy at Bentilee Nursery school. They settle quickly in a nurturing environment. Staff care for children greatly, which helps them to feel safe and secure. Children develop independence through their daily routines. This includes self-registration and sending good wishes to anyone not in school that day. They enjoy a shared breakfast, learning to take turns and carefully pour their own drinks.

Children behave well. The school has high expectations of children's behaviour. Staff get to know and understand each child. Children learn to cooperate well with each other and invite others to join in with their play. Staff gently guide children on how to manage their own feelings and behaviour and provide calm, quiet spaces if a child becomes overwhelmed.

The school is ambitious for children. The curriculum is exciting, and staff immerse children in their learning, which helps them to learn well. Children confidently make their own choices about the activities they would like to engage in. They enjoy enrichment opportunities linked to their learning, such as a dinosaur workshop and visits from the 'animal man'. This helps spark children's imagination and helps them to learn about the world around them.

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

The school has carefully designed a curriculum that considers the different starting points and interests that children have when they join the school. It sets out the key knowledge and steps of progression for children. Children delight in investigating and exploring the activities on offer. Most staff carefully check on what children know and what they can do. They use this information to support children's next steps in learning. However, staffing changes have had an impact on how well some staff support each child's individual learning and development needs.

The school swiftly identifies children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children with SEND receive timely and effective support that enables them to learn well alongside their peers.

The school prioritises early language and communication. Songs, rhymes and stories permeate throughout the school. Staff tell stories in an engaging way that helps children to develop a love of reading. Most staff encourage talk and discussion at every opportunity throughout the day. This supports children to develop their vocabulary. Staff help children to listen and identify sounds in words. This prepares them well for their next stages of learning.

The curriculum design carefully considers children's personal development. The environment provides a wealth of opportunities for children to be physically active. They learn to pedal, climb and build their own structures. Children love the messy play opportunities on offer. They learn about how things grow and enjoy gardening activities in the 'investigation garden'. Children learn about the importance of personal hygiene

through daily supervised toothbrushing and handwashing. Children benefit from experiences that help them to understand their community, such as a walk in the local area and celebrations of a variety of religious festivals.

At most times, the school creates a calm and purposeful environment that enables children to play and learn well together. Most staff have high expectations of behaviour for children. The school works effectively with families to ensure that they understand the importance of regular attendance. Most children attend school regularly, which helps to establish positive habits for the future.

The school and the governing body have worked together during a period of instability. Governors have a strong understanding of the school's strengths and where improvements are needed. Staff make strong connections with families. They provide updates on how well their children are learning and regularly invite families in for shared events. Parents and carers value the school's work immensely. Staff appreciate the school's support for their workload and well-being. They are proud to work at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Instability in staffing has led to some inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is delivered. As a result, some children do not always receive the support they need to learn as well as they could. The school should ensure that staff have opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum so that it is delivered consistently and effectively for all children.

## **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

|                                            |                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 123970                                                                   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Stoke-on-Trent                                                           |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10343864                                                                 |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Nursery                                                                  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Maintained                                                               |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 2 to 4                                                                   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                                                    |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 69                                                                       |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                                                       |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Ann Harvey                                                               |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Juliet Levingstone                                                       |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.bentileenursery.co.uk">www.bentileenursery.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 18 July 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005                  |

## Information about this school

- There have been a number of staffing changes since the previous inspection.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children.
- Children attend the nursery either part time, for two and a half days a week, or full time.
- The school provides breakfast and lunch for all children.
- The school does not currently 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 and other members of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors considered all areas of learning but focused closely through deep dives in these areas: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and expressive arts and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of sessions and spoke with teachers and children about their learning.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders about children’s behaviour, attendance, policies and procedures. The inspectors observed children’s behaviour during the school day.
- A range of documents were reviewed, including leaders’ plans to improve the school, their self-evaluation document and information published on the school’s website. The lead inspectors also looked at records of governors’ meetings.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 children’s interests first.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted’s surveys of staff and parents’ views. Inspectors talked informally with parents at the end of the school day.

## **Inspection team**

Cathy Young, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Alexandra Beardmore

Ofsted Inspector

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