

Inspection of a good school: Highters Heath Nursery School

11 School Road, Warstock, Highters Heath Nursery School, Birmingham, West Midlands B14 4BH

Inspection date: 10 April 2024

Outcome

Highters Heath Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children are very happy at Highters Heath Nursery. They enjoy their learning here. Parents and carers say that their children love coming to school. Children are welcomed with a kind, warm and friendly smile as they arrive at school each day.

Leaders are ambitious for all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children are eager to learn and they enjoy the range of experiences and activities on offer to enhance their wider development. They benefit from trips to places in the local community, such as the local shop. This helps to prepare children well for their next steps in education.

Children feel safe in school. They trust staff to care for them when they need comfort or reassurance. Children benefit from the positive relationships that they have with staff, which enhance their self-esteem, confidence and communication skills. Adults help children to settle quickly into a supportive learning environment.

Children are respectful towards others and take turns while they play with toys. They are taught to look after each other. Each morning, a group of children and an adult carry out a risk assessment of the outdoor environment to check that it is suitable for all children to play there.

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

The school has developed an effective curriculum. It identifies the smaller steps, including key vocabulary, that children should learn to help them meet the challenging end points. This often links to children's existing knowledge and interests, allowing staff to build on these with clear expectations of what they want children to achieve.

A significant number of children have lower than expected starting points. These children develop secure language skills. Most staff model effective speaking skills to the children regularly. They talk through what they are doing and repeat and extend what children say. However, a minority of staff are new to role and are less proficient in how the school develops children's communication and language skills.

Literacy has been prioritised across the nursery and is incorporated into all that the school does. Books and a love of stories is at the core of the curriculum. The school has identified a list of traditional stories, nursery favourites and books with a mathematical theme for staff to select from. Stories are shared throughout the day, and staff model reading to the children. The learning environments have a reading nook, which also supports children's opportunity to self-access books throughout the day. The school has a lending library for the children to take books home, and parent workshops have been held to talk to parents about the importance of books and bedtime stories.

The learning environment is calm, and the behaviour of children is focused and settled. Children know where all the resources are kept. They are independent in choosing what they want and enjoy sharing their achievements with the staff. Children follow instructions well. End of day routines are embedded, for example tidying up together at the end of the session. Children are encouraged to develop independence, while recognising the importance of teamwork and supporting each other.

Children with SEND are well supported. Leaders accurately identify children's needs as soon as they start nursery. Leaders work with parents and external agencies to plan the right support. Leaders ensure that staff are trained so that they can effectively support children with SEND. Staff review children's targets regularly. As a result, children with SEND progress well.

The school plans opportunities to support children's personal development, such as woodwork, forest school and gardening. At the start of each academic year, important faith and cultural events are planned for Christmas, Eid and the Lunar New Year. Educational visits and visitors are organised to support the learning experiences, including visiting the local library and engaging with residents at the local care home. Children have opportunities to be responsible citizens. They are selected as 'helpers' for their group. They take the register back to the office and assist with giving out lunches at lunchtime.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel well supported by the headteacher. They are confident that leaders take their workload and well-being into account and that they are listened to.

Governors are ambitious for the nursery. They want the best for the children. However, many of them are new to their role. They do not, currently, have sufficient information about the quality of provision 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)

- Some staff do not deliver the intended curriculum well enough to extend children's speaking and listening skills. This means that, from time to time, children's language development is not supported as well as it could be. The school should support staff to help them to implement all aspects of the curriculum well.
- Governors do not know yet enough about the strategic aspects of the school's work, such as the quality of the curriculum. This means that they are not able to challenge leaders as effectively as they could. The school needs to ensure that governors undertake appropriate steps to develop a good understanding of their role and the impact of leaders' actions.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 good in September 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 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	103134
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10294468
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	66
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Samantha Bandy
Headteacher	Elinor Warner
Website	www.hightersheathnursery.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been some staff changes following the previous inspection. The current headteacher took up post in December 2018.
- The school provides full- and part-time places for children aged two to four years old.
- The school does not make any use of 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and literacy. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to

teachers and some children about their learning and looked at samples of children's work.

- Inspectors met regularly with the headteacher. They also spoke to the SEND coordinator.
- Inspectors spoke to the headteacher and staff about children's behaviour, policies and procedures. Inspectors observed children's behaviour.
- Inspectors spoke with children to hear their views of their education as well as about behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors reviewed information about other areas of learning and the wider curriculum.
- Inspectors met with parents to hear their views about the school.
- The lead inspector spoke by telephone with the headteacher from a local school about the work of the school.
- The lead inspector spoke with governors.
- Inspectors spoke with staff and considered their responses to the Ofsted survey.
- 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 children's interests first.

Inspection team

Lynda Townsend, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Martina Abbott

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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