

Inspection of a good school: Featherstone Nursery School

29 Highcroft Road, Erdington, Birmingham, West Midlands B23 6AU

Inspection date: 22 September 2021

Outcome

Featherstone Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children at Featherstone Nursery School are happy and engaged in their learning. Relationships between staff and children are strong, and children settle in quickly and grow in confidence. The key-person system is well implemented throughout the school. Each child's key person supports their learning and emotional well-being. There is regular communication with parents.

Children enjoy a rich and varied curriculum. Staff get to know the children well and find out what they already know and can do; they plan activities that develop children's interests. The curriculum is also designed so that children learn how to keep safe during play, for example when using simple tools such as scissors. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive a high level of support from dedicated and caring staff. Children who speak English as an additional language see and hear their home language in the environment, for example through dual language books.

Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. They encourage children to take turns and share as a result, and children are kind to each other. Children are keen to explore the resources on offer. However, leaders are aware that the learning environment would benefit from further improvements.

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

Leaders are currently adapting the curriculum to meet the requirements of the new early years' framework. However, this is not yet fully implemented. Leaders have been proactive in adapting the curriculum in response to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. For example, they recognise that during the pandemic some children had fewer opportunities to be active. Therefore, this term there is a focus on the development of children's physical skills.

Staff focus on children's communication and language development effectively. They skilfully adjust their communication style according to children's needs, including expert

modelling of the correct language. Children learn mathematical skills so that they are prepared for their next stage in learning. For example, the story of 'Peter Rabbit' saw children collecting garden vegetables in the outdoor environment. They used appropriate language to describe the vegetables' shape, colour and size.

Children learn songs, nursery rhymes and listen to stories. Using 'story sacks' that contain a book and props, children retell traditional tales confidently by acting them out. Parental workshops on nursery rhymes help parents support their children in learning key rhymes. These and other activities are helping children develop a love of reading and an understanding of stories and characters.

Staff teach children why it is important to eat healthily. They help children become independent, getting them into the routine of putting their coats on when they go outside. Children are expected to tidy up when they have finished their activities.

Leaders are aware that many children have limited access to outdoor space at home during the pandemic. There is a strong focus this term on developing children's strength, co-ordination and agility. However, leaders understand that they need to develop the environment further, including developing the use of resources so that they provide the right level of challenge.

Children learn to respect and value one another. Staff reinforce expectations. They are excellent role models and help children form positive relationships with each other. Children behave well and receive rewards when they show good sitting and listening.

Staff receive regular training and development, particularly in relation to meeting the needs of pupils with SEND. As a result, all children, including those with SEND and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress from their starting points.

Leaders manage and support staff well. They say that a focus on well-being and workload has strengthened the team. Parents also say good things about the school. They say that they are particularly pleased with the caring and friendly staff. This nurturing ethos is a strength of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils' welfare is leaders' top priority. Leaders train staff so that they know what to do if they have concerns about a child's welfare or regarding a colleague's practice.

The school works well with other organisations to support pupils, and their families, to get the help they need.

Leaders and governors check that staff are suitable before they begin work at the school.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, and learn about road safety and being safe around animals.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all aspects of the new curriculum have been fully implemented yet. Leaders should update their school's curriculum planning to reflect the changes they have made and are making to ensure that children can experience the full range of curriculum activities.
- The pandemic has paused some plans to improve indoor and outdoor learning environments. Leaders should now continue to develop these learning environments and extend the open-ended resources that are available, to ensure that all children receive appropriate challenge.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour, or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2012.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	103139
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10199582
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	68
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Abigail Cartmale
Headteacher	Sharon Eeles
Website	www.featherstonenurseryschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 January 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Featherstone Nursery has a shared leadership structure with Osborne Nursery School. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and special education needs and/or disabilities coordinator (SENCo) work across both schools. The two schools have separate budgets and governing boards, but both cater for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds living in the Erdington area.
- The Nursery offers a mix of part-time places of 15 hours per week and 30 hours for working parents. 15-hour places are taken as either a morning (8.30 to 11.30am for five days) or afternoon (12.30 to 3.30pm for five days) or two and a half days.
- Around 40% of the children speak English as an additional language.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors had formal meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the SENCo, the Nursery teacher, governors, and the senior office manager.

- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about safeguarding arrangements and routines at the school. The lead inspector examined the record of employment checks on school staff.
- Inspectors undertook deep dives in communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and physical development. The inspectors visited adult-directed sessions and observed free-flow activities, scrutinised curriculum planning and talked with staff about the way these areas are planned and taught.
- The lead inspector also looked at the school’s website and scrutinised several policies.

Inspection team

Heather Phillips, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Karen O’Keefe

Ofsted Inspector

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