

Inspection of a good school: Moorlands Centre Nursery School

Beanhill Local Centre, Dodkin, Moorlands Family Centre, Unit 6, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK6 4LP

Inspection date: 30 January 2024

Outcome

Moorlands Centre Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

'Community' and 'nurture' are values at the heart of this small school. The school wants the very best for the children. Adults know children and their families exceptionally well and form strong relationships with them. This helps children to be and to feel safe at school. Children arrive each day with a huge smile. They enjoy coming to school and look forward to the exciting activities adults have planned for them.

Staff have high expectations for children's learning and the way that they behave with one another. As a result, children's behaviour is excellent. Adults support children to be kind, caring and respectful. Children play happily with their friends and any minor disagreements are quickly sorted out by the adults, who model the expected behaviour, like sharing or taking turns.

Children enjoy learning and are curious about what is happening all around them. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about their children's experiences at Moorlands Nursery. They comment on the confidence their children have and the progress they make, including when their child has special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

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

The school is ambitious for all children. Staff have recently reviewed the school's curriculum. They have mapped out the things children in this community need to know and be able to do by the time they leave. The curriculum has a strong focus on developing children's social skills, independence and resilience. As a result, the nursery has a calm and purposeful atmosphere. Children show high levels of concentration and perseverance when they encounter difficulties, for example when completing a jigsaw puzzle or riding their bikes up and down the ramps provided outside.

The school is mindful of the community the children live in. Staff plan activities to broaden children's experiences and encourage regular attendance at school. For example, children learn about road safety. They also incubate chicks and pick litter in the local park. A particular highlight recently has been the screening of the children's Christmas nativity at a family cinema-style event.

Staff understand how young children learn best. This enables them to identify and address any needs children may have promptly. This ensures that all children, including those with SEND, can take part in activities alongside their friends. The importance of developing speaking and listening skills is rightly emphasised by all adults. They model the language children should use in different situations. For example, at snack time, the children wait patiently for their turn and say please and thank you.

Children, including those with SEND, develop key literacy and numeracy skills. They learn to listen to and identify sounds accurately. This prepares them well to learn phonics in Reception Year. Children enjoy listening to stories read by adults and often sit in the 'reading chair' to retell familiar stories with confidence. Children can count, recite and identify numbers past five. They enjoy using their counting in the games they play, for example 'What's the time Mr Wolf?'. During group time, adults use props to help children understand new words or events in stories. Children delight in joining in with these activities and enjoy the anticipation of what might be coming next.

Adults use children's interests to develop and extend learning. However, not all adults are clear on the exact steps children need to move through to reach the ambitious end goals of the new curriculum. As a result, activities are not always sharply focused enough on the specific knowledge that children need to learn. This means adults cannot always effectively check children's understanding and move children's learning on as well as they could.

Staff feel supported by leaders to carry out their roles. They value the opportunities provided to enhance their skills and expand their knowledge. Staff have welcomed the approach by the interim headteacher to streamline and improve some of the systems used in school. This enables them to focus on the important work they do with 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 curriculum does not identify the steps that build over time towards the school's curriculum goals consistently or effectively. Consequently, some staff sometimes plan activities that are not focused precisely enough on the component knowledge children need to learn. The school should make sure that the curriculum is designed to ensure that children's knowledge builds cumulatively so that they achieve as well as they could.

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 June 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	126565
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10296338
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	37
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	June Harrison
Headteacher (interim)	Will Brooks
Website	www.moorlandsnurseryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- At the time of inspection, the school had an interim headteacher.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.

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 has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the senior leadership team, members of staff, and two members of the governing body.
- 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 pupils' interests first.

- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the morning and afternoon Nursery sessions. Inspectors also considered the four responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' written comments.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development, and expressive arts and design. For each deep dive, the inspector met leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to adults in the setting, spoke to children about their learning.
- Inspectors also looked at children's work, curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- An inspector looked at the school's own evaluation and development plans.
- Inspectors took into account the views of staff during meetings with them and from the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Clare Haines, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Mineza Maher

Ofsted Inspector

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