

Inspection of a good school: Westminster Nursery School

Nelson Street, Crewe, Cheshire CW2 7LJ

Inspection date:

20 September 2023

Outcome

Westminster Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children are happy and settled at this welcoming nursery school. They are eager to have breakfast with their friends when they arrive. Children find their name cards to mark themselves as present, before beginning their play. Parents and carers told inspectors that the school wants the best for their children.

The school has high expectations of children's achievement. Typically, children aim to try their best. Their play is purposeful. For example, children repeated words, such as 'pop' and 'stamp', while they excitedly chased bubbles. They worked together to build a tower using construction blocks. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn well.

Staff use consistent strategies to gently encourage children's positive behaviour. Children follow the classroom rules that the school has implemented, such as walking indoors and being kind. This helps classrooms to be calm spaces where children learn. Children are respectful towards others and take turns while they play with toys.

Children encounter a variety of experiences that enhance their wider development. For example, sports coaches, librarians and dentists visit the nursery. Children benefit from trips to places in the local community and further afield, such as to the local shop.

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

The school has recently placed a strong focus on improving the quality of the early years provision. Overall, the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that identifies ambitious goals for children to work towards. Typically, this helps children to achieve well.

For the most part, the school has identified the small steps of knowledge that children should know across the curriculum. However, in some areas of learning, the precise content that children should learn, and when this should happen, is less clear. At times, this limits how well some children build their vocabulary, knowledge and skills.

Typically, staff select appropriate activities to deliver the curriculum well. They explore children's interests and identify what they should learn next. Staff have a firm understanding of how young children learn and develop. They have warm relationships with children, including when they support learning. Some staff, however, do not deliver all areas of learning as well as they should. Occasionally, this hinders how well some children achieve.

The school identifies children with SEND quickly and makes sure that they get the help that they need promptly. This is strengthened by effective partnerships with external agencies and with parents. As a result, children with SEND benefit fully from their time at the nursery.

The school has placed a sharp focus on communication, language and literacy. During the day, children benefit from carefully chosen songs and nursery rhymes. Staff make story time interesting. They read books with animation and use props to bring stories to life. Staff regularly check how well children are developing in their communication and language. They provide focused support for those children who may be at risk of falling behind.

The school understands the importance of working with parents. For example, children and parents enjoy using a lending library, which allows them to share books together at home. Parents attend sessions where they can play alongside their children in nursery. These initiatives help parents to support their children's learning.

Children learn the school routines from when they start in the classroom for two-year-olds. Staff support and nurture them to settle quickly and to develop a strong sense of belonging. Generally, children behave well and are thoroughly involved in their independent play and group activities. If there is any low-level disruption, staff are quick to remedy this so that there is minimal impact on children's play and learning.

The school provides a rich programme to support children's personal development. Staff help children to increase their self-care skills, for example by encouraging them to put on their own waterproof clothing in readiness for outdoor play. Children learn how to look after themselves and how to stay safe. This includes learning about crossing roads safely and about how to express their feelings. Visits from professionals, such as the police, help children to learn about others who assist in the local community.

The governing body supports and challenges the school to provide children with the best start to their education. The school ensures that staff get the time required to carry out their roles well. It has reduced the workload of staff, which allows them to spend more time with the children. Staff told inspectors that everybody helps each other and that the school is like a family.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school is still honing the content of the curriculum in some areas of learning. This includes the precise knowledge that children should learn and when they should learn it. Over time, this hinders how well some children build their knowledge, skills and vocabulary in some areas of learning. The school should refine its curriculum thinking so that staff know exactly what to teach and when.
- Some staff do not deliver all areas of learning consistently well. This means that, from time to time, some children do not learn as much as they could. The school should support staff to help them to implement all aspects of the curriculum well.

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 November 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 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	110953
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10291404
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	57
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Donna Reed
Headteacher	Emma Connor
Website	www.westminsternurseryschool.net
Date of previous inspection	11 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school provides education for two-year-old children.
- A new headteacher and chair of governors have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school does not make 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 into communication and language, physical development and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders and visited a sample of lessons. They spoke with staff and with children about their learning. Inspectors looked at samples of children's work.

- The lead inspector observed some children sharing books with familiar adults.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders of the school. The lead inspector met with two governors, including the chair of governors. He had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- 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 pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed how children behaved around the school, including outdoors and during lunchtime. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey to consider.
- An inspector met with parents at the end of the school day. Inspectors also took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. They spoke with staff about their workload and their well-being.

Inspection team

David Lobodzinski, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sandra Hamilton	Ofsted Inspector

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