

Inspection of Bensham Grove Nursery School

Bensham Grove Nursery School, Sidney Grove, Gateshead NE8 2XD

Inspection date:

22 July 2025

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children thrive in this exceptionally nurturing and inclusive environment. Even the youngest children develop secure attachments with trusted adults and begin to explore with confidence. They move seamlessly between indoor and outdoor learning spaces, confidently making choices about their play. For example, toddlers concentrate intently when identifying mini-beasts with magnifying glasses, compare textures as they mix natural materials and take pride in mark making and early writing.

The outdoor environment is a rich and integral part of the curriculum, offering children daily opportunities for exploration, creativity and physical development. Children delight in the beach-themed outdoor area, where they scoop, pour, dig and build together in the sand. They invent imaginative play scenarios, such as superheroes, picnics and seaside cafés, while strengthening small-muscle skills and deepening social interaction. In the adjacent forest area, children engage in storytelling, den building and nature-based exploration, developing resilience and curiosity. The natural design and thoughtful resourcing of both areas enable all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to explore sensory-rich learning in a joyful, inclusive space.

Staff are excellent role models and set high expectations for every child. Children listen attentively, negotiate with peers and show genuine empathy. For example, when a character's blanket tore in a story, children responded, 'She will be sad.' These interactions reflect the setting's strong focus on emotional development and communication. Clear routines, positive reinforcement and strong relationships mean children feel safe, valued and well prepared for their next stage in learning.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Leaders deliver an ambitious and inclusive curriculum that is firmly rooted in each child's unique experiences. Home visits and detailed conversations with families build a deep understanding of children's interests, needs and backgrounds. These insights inform highly personalised starting points that prioritise emotional security and strong relationships.
- Children with SEND are exceptionally well supported through consistent routines, visual strategies and targeted adaptations. Staff work closely with families to embed bespoke approaches across the setting. They reflect regularly on what works best for each child and ensure strategies are fully embedded in daily practice. This inclusive, consistent approach enables all children to participate fully in the curriculum and make sustained progress from their individual starting points.
- Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of child development and how to

support learning through high-quality, responsive interactions. They skilfully adapt their approach to each child's stage of development, using strategies such as repetition, pausing and gesture, particularly for those whose language is still emerging. These approaches help children build their vocabulary, communicate their needs and develop confidence in social interactions.

- Children benefit from a rich, immersive literacy curriculum that celebrates their voice and creativity. During group time, children narrate their own imaginative stories, which staff carefully scribe and read aloud to the group. These are proudly displayed, promoting a strong sense of authorship and achievement. In forest sessions, children extend their narratives by crafting story characters from natural materials, such as sticks and leaves. This integrated approach strengthens children's comprehension, enhances expressive language and nurtures a lifelong love of storytelling and books.
- Physical development is purposefully embedded across the provision. Babies climb on small slides, roll cars down ramps and handle whisks in the outdoor kitchen. Older children scoop soil, balance on equipment and navigate ride-on toys. These meaningful experiences promote strength, coordination and independence, while encouraging healthy, active habits from an early age.
- Parents speak with genuine warmth about the care and education their children receive. Families describe the setting as a safe and inclusive space where their children thrive. Staff maintain strong, trusting relationships with families, including those facing complex challenges. This consistent, two-way partnership supports learning and well-being across home and the setting, creating a powerful sense of belonging for the whole family.
- Leadership is visionary and rooted in a deep understanding of the community. Leaders are highly visible, responsive and committed to continuous improvement. They provide strong professional and emotional support to staff, model reflective practice and prioritise purposeful training. Their values and expectations are shared by the whole team, resulting in a cohesive, highly skilled workforce. Staff are confident, skilled and motivated, creating a culture of high expectations where children consistently succeed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2748641
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10405846
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 5
Total number of places	98
Number of children on roll	230
Name of registered person	Bensham Grove Nursery School
Registered person unique reference number	2748638
Telephone number	0191 433 4090
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Bensham Grove Nursery School registered in 2023. It operates within Bensham Nursery School in Gateshead. The setting employs 48 members of childcare staff. Of these, 33 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting is open all year round from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, except for bank holidays. The setting provides funded early education for children aged between nine months and four years of age.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Claire Budge

Inspection activities

- Senior leaders and the inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the setting and discussed the early years curriculum.
- Children spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector talked to staff at appropriate times during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Staff spoke to the inspector about how they support children with SEND.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact that this was having on children's learning.
- The inspector and the manager carried out a joint observation of a communication and language activity.
- The inspector spoke to several parents during the inspection and took account of their views.
- Leaders showed the inspector documentation to demonstrate the suitability of staff.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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