

Inspection of an outstanding school: Oxclose Nursery School

Brancepeth Road, Oxclose, Brancepeth Road, Washington, Tyne and Wear NE38 0LA

Inspection dates:

25 June 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children are happy and well cared for at Oxclose Nursery School. They arrive excited to start their learning each day. The school has high expectations for all children including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children rise to these high ambitions. It is a truly inclusive school. The school is a calm and nurturing place to learn. Caring relationships between children and adults are ever present across the school day.

Children enjoy learning a curriculum that has recently been re-developed. The school is still putting some of these changes in place. The school rightly continues to focus on making all aspects of the curriculum as strong as each other.

Children thrive in a culture of well-established routines. Song and rhyme help children move around school sensibly. Children enjoy the responsibilities they have to care for and help each other. They act as daily helpers. This includes carrying out important jobs such as working with the cook to prepare daily snack time.

Parents and carers are very positive about the school. One parent captured the views of many in the following way, 'it is such a positive and nurturing environment for the children.'

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

New leaders and staff have worked to further strengthen the curriculum. The steps of progress children will make at Oxclose Nursery School are now clearly set out. This is beginning to help staff and leaders understand the progress children make in more detail. Adults make regular checks on the progress children make. However, these are not always

closely aligned to the intended curriculum. This means it is not consistently clear if children are learning the key knowledge and skills the school intends them to.

Staff use high-quality interactions to engage children in their learning. During daily activities, such as snack and story time, staff reinforce and develop language effectively. Children enjoy talking and chatting with each other. Adults are skilful in ensuring all children contribute to these activities. An early love of reading is well established. Adults read and share books every day with children. Children sustain their attention well during story time. They join in with familiar stories such as 'The Snail and The Whale' or 'Billy's Bucket' with enthusiasm and joy. The school's recent work on communication and language makes it clear what children will learn and in what order. This is the same for other areas of learning such as understanding the world. Sometimes, when adults work directly with children, the learning intention is not clear. The activity choice does not ensure that all children make the progress the school intends them to.

Children with SEND are well supported in school. They participate fully in the whole school offer. They learn alongside their peers well. Where necessary, children with SEND have appropriate adaptations to help them communicate. Children with SEND grow in confidence and independence over time.

The school has clear expectations for behaviour. Children rise to these expectations. Their behaviour and care for each other is a strength of the school. Adults encourage a wide range of independent skills which children relish. For example, tidying up after activities or sharing out snack time provisions. Across the school day children play together, share and take turns without fuss. Adults support children promptly if they need care. Children trust the adults who work with them. Dedicated staff develop positive relationships with families. Family learning workshops, such as the family nurture sessions, support families in understanding child development and behaviour. Members of the school community talk to children about their roles to raise aspirations.

Those responsible for governance play an active part in the school community. They know the strengths and areas for development for the school. Staff feel well supported by leaders. Staff reflect that the well-being of the whole school community is a high priority. Staff are proud to work 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)

- In some areas of the curriculum, the approach to adult-led learning does not support the aims of the curriculum consistently well. This means children do not learn the intended curriculum as well as they could. The school should continue to refine the

curriculum so that the small steps in progress that children will make are clear and these are well matched to the activities adults lead with children.

- Assessment and checks on learning are not consistently well aligned to the curriculum. The school does not always know how well children are progressing towards the intended aims of the curriculum. The school should align the checks they make on children's progress closely to improve the school's understanding of how well children are learning the intended curriculum.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 outstanding in March 2015.

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	108751
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10315548
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	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Philip Cox
Headteacher	Ruth Brown
Website	www.oxclosenursery.com
Date(s) of previous inspection	6 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The Headteacher took up post in February 2024.
- The school was previously part of a federation of three nursery schools. The school left this federation in September 2023.
- The school has an additionally resourced provision, funded by the local authority, for children with physical and/or medical needs who have an education, health and care plan. This provision has places for 2 children. There are currently 0 children on roll in these resourced provision places.
- The school offers a before- and after-school wraparound offer. This is managed by the school.
- The school does not use any alternative providers of education.

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 has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and understanding the world. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited provision where they observed children at different times of the day and spoke to teachers and teaching assistants. They looked at examples of children's learning in learning journals.
- 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 gathered views of parents informally in person and formally through responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and free-text responses. The views of staff were considered through the staff survey and meetings with them.
- Inspectors spoke with the head teacher and staff responsible for safeguarding, behaviour, children with SEND and the curriculum.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives from the governing body, those responsible for school improvement and the local authority.

Inspection team

Emily Stevens, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Roger Ward

Ofsted Inspector

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