

Inspection of an outstanding school: Gloucester Nursery School

Camborne Close, Delapre, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN4 8PH

Inspection date:

11 October 2023

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?

Parents and carers welcome the opportunity for their child to attend this nursery school. Since attending, they can see positive changes in their child's development. They appreciate how the school provides their child with a secure start to early education. As one parent said, with a comment that was typical of many, 'It is such a great nursery. I would recommend it to anybody.'

Children very quickly learn the 'Gloucester way'. It enables them to learn how to be independent, curious and a good friend. They learn how to regulate their emotions, to share and to look after one another. For example, children praise each other for being kind. This means that children learn in a calm, positive and safe environment.

The school provides carefully considered opportunities for children to learn about their community and the wider world. Children can visit the local amenities, where many parents work. This helps them to understand different roles and professions in society. Children enjoy opportunities to work alongside a local artist. They look forward to showcasing their work at a local abbey. A weekly visit from 'Bear' the dog provides some children with emotional support and others with opportunities to overcome their fear of animals.

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

This nursery school is ambitious for all children, regardless of their starting points. Everyone understands what children must know and learn during their time here. This ensures that children are ready for their next stage in education. However, the nursery

school is in a period of transition. There have been recent significant changes in leadership. Some school leadership roles are not yet fully established.

A carefully crafted curriculum outlines the order of what children need to know and learn. This order closely links to child development. For example, at earlier stages, children explore paints. Later, they independently select and mix powder paints to make different colours.

Alongside communication and language, children's personal, social and emotional development is central to the nursery school's provision. Adults skilfully enable children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to use communication methods such as pictures and symbols to express their needs and ideas. Children with SEND are fully included in all aspects of nursery life.

Right from the very start, children are immersed in books. They join in with the repeated language in the stories they share. For example, the youngest children take delight in making animal noises as they lift the flaps in the books that they share. The nursery school is ensuring that the curriculum sets out clearly the carefully chosen books adults will use with children and when.

The schools wants children to develop their vocabulary well. Adults offer questions, prompts and commentary throughout the day. This helps children to adjust their thinking and ideas. For example, as children chalked a path outside, adults modelled how this may help another group to find the squirrel from the story they had shared earlier, or an apple tree in the school grounds.

Jamie, the school's puppet, helps children to understand different risks and, when needed, how to ask for help. Children learn how food provides 'energy' but also the importance of being still and being asleep. They have frequent opportunities to learn about communities different from their own. Families are invited into the nursery school to share different foods, cultures and celebrations. For example, children experienced Ghana's independence day through dancing and dressing up in traditional clothing.

Staff are proud to work at this nursery school. They feel well supported and valued. They appreciate the extra time they receive to carry out any additional roles.

There have been some significant changes in the local governing body. Governors are developing their understanding of how to support and challenge the nursery school as it moves through a period of transition.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There have been some significant changes in leadership and staffing. This means that not all leaders have complete oversight of their roles and responsibilities yet. The school needs to ensure that all leaders have an accurate understanding of their roles and responsibilities so that the nursery school continues to develop and progress.

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 November 2013.

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	121785
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10267953
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Karishma Chugh
Headteacher	Lisa Jeffery
Website	www.gloucesternurseryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there has been significant changes in governance.
- The headteacher was appointed in April 2023.
- The nursery school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The nursery 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 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.
- 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 held meetings with leaders to discuss the nursery’s curriculum, including the provision for pupils with SEND. The lead inspector met with representatives of the local governing body and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language; personal, social and emotional development; and expressive arts and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders and spent time observing in the classrooms. Inspectors also talked to staff and children and observed activities to determine the impact of the curriculum and teaching methods on children’s learning and development.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documents, including school improvement plans, governors’ minutes and records of visits from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted’s parent and staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Shaheen Hussain, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Liz Moore

Ofsted Inspector

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