

Inspection of an outstanding school: Atherstone Nursery School

Kings Avenue, (Ent Opp Fire Station), Atherstone, Warwickshire CV9 1LF

Inspection date: 16 July 2024

Outcome

Atherstone Nursery School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

At Atherstone Nursery School, children are happy, safe and excited about learning. Staff want to do their very best for each child. The school's ethos, 'right start, bright futures', is central to its daily work. Parents and carers are highly positive about the care and learning that the school provides. Children achieve well and are extremely well prepared for their next stage of learning.

Right from when children join, the school sets high expectations of behaviour. Staff set clear and consistent boundaries. They support children to recognise and manage their feelings and emotions. Children show consistently high levels of respect for their peers, staff and visitors. They are polite and well mannered. Children behave exceptionally well.

Weekly sessions help children develop new interests. For instance, gardening, sewing, yoga, beat-bots and cooking. Children have fun weaving with fabric, and thread needles as they learn to sew. These activities help address limited early experiences due to the recent COVID-19 pandemic. This is particularly the case in social and physical development.

Children enjoy a range of opportunities and experiences. For example, they make and deliver cards to local residents and businesses. They enjoy visits from people in the community, such as firefighters and a gamekeeper. All this helps to broaden children's horizons.

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

The school has constructed a curriculum that is highly ambitious for all pupils. The curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced based on what children already know and can do. Highly skilled adults support and extend learning. Teaching is designed to help children develop their knowledge and skills successfully over time. Children consistently demonstrate high levels of curiosity, concentration and enjoyment. They listen intently. Children respond positively to adults and each other. Staff quickly identify

and take swift action to remedy any gaps in knowledge. All this means that children achieve highly. They learn and remember more of the curriculum over time.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are swiftly identified. They get the right help and support, including from external professionals, when required. The curriculum is suitably and successfully adapted to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Targeted interventions and additional adults effectively support children to progress in their learning. The school proactively engages with external professionals, such as occupational therapists, for any pupil that requires bespoke support. As a result, pupils with SEND develop the knowledge, skills and abilities they need to be successful and achieve well.

Children get off to a great start in their early reading. High-quality books stimulate learning. The carefully adapted phonics programme supports children to listen to and identify sounds in the environment. Children listen attentively and respond to familiar stories, rhymes and songs that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children who fall behind are well supported to catch up, which they do. This includes highly effective speech and language support. Children acquire the early reading skills appropriate to their age.

The school provides high-quality curriculum and care practices to support children's emotional and character development. Staff teach children the language of feelings and emotions through storytelling. Children talk about their feelings and show expressions. They learn to manage their own feelings and behaviour, understanding how these have an impact on others. Staff give clear messages to children about why it is important to eat, drink, rest, exercise and be kind to each other. Children learn about taking turns, sharing and being kind. They enjoy making new friends. Different nationalities and cultures are celebrated, for example Eid and Chinese New Year. Children learn the personal, physical and social skills they need to succeed in the next stage of their education.

Leaders, including governors, are passionate and highly ambitious for every child. They make sure that staff deliver consistently high-quality provision to all children. Leaders understand the limitations of assessment. They ensure it does not create unnecessary burdens on staff or children. Staff are positive about the support they receive from leaders to manage their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 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	125484
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10322786
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	112
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dean Wainwright
Executive Headteacher	Nicola Burton
Website	http://www.atherstonenurseryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	9 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The head of school took up post in September 2023.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The number of pupils on roll at the school has increased since the last inspection.
- The school has a greater than national proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.
- 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 captured the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading (including communication and language), mathematical development, and personal, social and education. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of sessions, spoke to teachers, spoke to some children about their learning and looked at samples of children’s work. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupil’s work and held discussions with leaders about the physical development curriculum and assessment.
- The inspectors observed children reading with familiar adult and reviewed reading resources.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation on the school’s website.
- 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 children’s interests first.
- The inspectors observed children in lessons and at other times during the day.
- The inspectors held meetings with the executive head of school, the head of school, the special educational needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding leaders, curriculum leaders and members of the governing body. The lead inspector also held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, and the free-text responses received during the inspection. The lead inspector considered the responses to Ofsted’s staff survey.

Inspection team

Lorraine Lord, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sarah Dukes

Ofsted Inspector

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