

Inspection of Highfield Nursery School

Chesterfield Drive, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 6DW

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 May 2024

| Overall effectiveness | Outstanding |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| The quality of education | Outstanding |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Outstanding |
| Personal development | Outstanding |
| Leadership and management | Outstanding |
| Previous inspection grade | Outstanding |

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since July 2013. The school received an ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Act on 19 January 2023.

What is it like to attend this school?

Highfield Nursery School is a happy and highly inclusive community. Everyone is welcome here. Staff are passionate about every child succeeding. They take the time to understand children as individuals. This helps build the incredibly warm and positive relationships throughout the school.

Exciting activities spark children's curiosity because they connect their interests with new learning. Staff share high-quality language with children when they talk to them. This helps children speak with confidence when they share ideas. This confidence helps children to persist at tasks they find tricky. They are highly resilient to setbacks. All of this means children develop very positive attitudes to learning.

Children play incredibly well together. They are co-operative and kind. They help each other and have high levels of self-control when waiting to take turns on the hammock or the trikes. Children are polite and use good manners at mealtimes. Staff help children understand the rules and routines. Behaviour is exemplary.

Children care for their environment and the natural world, finding a safe place for snails they discover in the garden. Children learn how to keep themselves safe using the woodwork tools and how to cut up vegetables carefully. Children are very well prepared for their next stage in education.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum to enable children to make connections in their learning. They have carefully considered what children need to learn to prepare them well for Reception. The school has identified key attributes children need to learn to develop resilience and a thirst for learning. Staff use assessment incredibly well to check what children know and can do. They also identify what children are interested in. They use all this information to adapt the curriculum to extend children's learning. This helps children to become curious, motivated learners that achieve very well.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in every aspect of Nursery life. The school identify the specific needs of children with SEND. Staff understand how to help children with SEND to achieve. Staff are experts at helping children work towards specific targets in their play. Some children benefit from fun activities in a quiet space where well trained adults help them improve their speech, language and communication needs.

Stories, rhymes and poems are an integral part of the curriculum. Children love sharing books. Staff read stories daily that compliment current learning, such as eggs hatching. The development of children's communication and language skills underpins the curriculum. High quality back and forth interactions help children learn to converse confidently. Children learn new words as part of their play because staff

are highly ambitious in the language they use with children, such as being an 'architect' when designing a model or writing an 'invoice' for a 'customer' during imaginative 'garage' play.

Children develop a secure and strong understanding of number and shape. They like using measuring tapes as part of their imaginative play and counting to check all their friends are present. Well thought through series of activities mean children with different attendance patterns do not miss out on learning.

Children develop exceptional attitudes to learning. They have high levels of perseverance and routinely try their best. Familiar routines help the youngest children develop independence and social skills. Children make a tangible contribution to the local community by litter picking and 'random acts of kindness'. Children have a strong sense of belonging and develop positive habits for attending school every day.

The school provides extensive support that promotes children's personal development. Children learn to care for the environment, using 'green hands' as a reminder to turn off lights. They know eating too many sugary foods is not good for them and they make healthy choices at mealtimes. Children develop an understanding of different cultures through a range of visitors to the school.

The school consistently strives to provide high quality provision for all children. Staff professional development is highly purposeful. This means it makes a positive difference to teachers' knowledge and benefits children. Governors have a strong understanding of their role and effectively hold leaders to account. Staff and parents are highly positive about the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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| Unique reference number | 124525 |
| Local authority | Suffolk |
| Inspection number | 10323682 |
| 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 | 107 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Lauren Woodward |
| Headteacher | Ruth Coleman |
| Website | www.highfield.suffolk.sch.uk |
| Date(s) of previous inspection | 19 January 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision to meet the needs of the children.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, special educational needs coordinators, teachers, staff and governors. The inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in four areas of learning: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development, understanding the world and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited classes and spoke to some children during their play about what they were learning. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other areas.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and children; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Inspection team

Mireille MacRaid, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nathan Lowe

His Majesty's Inspector

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