

Brearley Nursery School

Address: Brearley Street, Newtown, Birmingham, West Midlands, B19 3XJ

Unique reference number (URN): 103121

Inspection report: 12 May 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Attendance is affected by the very young age of the children. It is also affected by the colds and illnesses that come with their first experience of being together in groups. Some families travel long distances. Leaders respond with care and persistence. They call families on the first day a child is absent and visit the homes of children who have not returned. They offer the school's minibus to families who are struggling. They invite families who find it hard to attend regularly to the drop-in sessions. Holidays during term time are discouraged through a formal process. Leaders understand the patterns in their group of children and act on them.

Behaviour at the nursery is calm. Children follow routines they have learned. They listen to adults and concentrate well. They want to take part. Leaders help children understand their feelings through pictures, stories and small-group work. For children with special educational needs and/or disabilities who need extra help with their feelings, adults use approaches that have been agreed with parents. Children with sensory needs are supported in the soft play area. The trained team of staff know how to keep children safe when they are upset. They use gentle approaches and record what happens. Parents say their children use these same approaches at home. Any behaviour incident is shared with parents. Bullying and any form of discrimination, harassment or abuse have no place in this nursery.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Inclusion shapes everything this nursery does. Leaders begin to understand each child from the moment families first walk through the door. They gather information from health visitors. They complete checks for 2-year-olds, and they take time to watch each child settle in. When they have concerns, leaders bring families together with the right professionals.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. They benefit from visual timetables and picture cues. They use sensory resources and have one-to-one help from an adult who knows them. A smaller, quieter room offers a calm base for children who find busier spaces hard. Many move into the larger rooms when they are ready. Key workers know children with SEND deeply. They can describe the small steps each child has taken.

Leaders use their early years additional funding for disadvantaged children intelligently. In addition to suitable staffing, they use it to fund an artist who works with the children and a music teacher who visits each week. They also use the funding to pay for trips that children would not otherwise go on. Leaders subsidise the cost of meals so that no family is left struggling. Every single child in this school is supported to thrive.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders know the community deeply and have shaped a school that puts children and families at its heart. Leaders are deeply connected to the families they serve. They go out to collect children whose families need that help. They find places for children whose families

cannot pay. The headteacher supports parents through bereavement, new babies, illness and isolation. Staff follow her lead. Their commitment to this community is felt every day by the children and families who walk through the door.

Staff describe leaders as approachable, considerate of their wellbeing and committed to the children. They are proud to work here.

Leaders have built consistent practice across all rooms. The headteacher holds 3 short meetings each week with staff to share what is happening for individual children and to talk about what works well. Routines, songs and approaches are familiar to children wherever they are in the building. Staff have had training in signing, in supporting children with autism, in speech and language strategies and in approaches to children's feelings.

The school is part of a network of local nursery schools that support one another, sharing leadership when needed. Link governors visit the school and report on what they see. Governors check the staff record each term. They scrutinise how the funding for children from less well-off families is spent.

Governors both support and challenge school leaders. Partnership with parents and the wider community is central to this school. It is woven through every part of its work.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Personal development sits at the heart of children's learning at this nursery. Children hear about their rights every day. Their identities, their families and their cultures are visible all around them. Family trees with photographs hang in every room. A display celebrates the many languages spoken in the nursery. A day to celebrate different cultures brings parents in to share their traditions. This gives the nursery an opportunity to introduce ideas such as fairness, respect and kindness in ways that children can understand.

Children learn to recognise and name their feelings. They use pictures, puppets and small-group circle time to talk about how they feel. Children who need extra help have a named sensory box just for them and a quiet space they can retreat to. Adults model the language of feelings throughout the day so that children can begin to talk about them.

Children's health is built into the day. The cook prepares a hot meal from fresh produce each day. Parents are invited to workshops on healthy eating. A dentist visits the children. Children take part in gentle peer massage. This helps them to understand the idea of consent and to care for one another. Outdoor learning builds resilience and lets children take small risks safely.

Children's experiences widen through trips by bus and tram to country parks, the farm and the nature reserve. They mark a day in March that celebrates books at the library. They celebrate at the end of their nursery year with a graduation. When the time comes to move on to the next school, the transition is carefully planned. For children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, a familiar adult may go with them on their first day at their new school.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Children join the nursery from starting points that are typically low. This is particularly true of their communication and language. By the time they leave, all children have made progress. They know stories and rhymes. They can count and recognise early numbers. They look after themselves at lunch and at the toilet. They have learned the names of their friends. They have words and pictures to share their feelings.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make steady progress. The wider experiences the nursery offers, including the trips, the artist and the music teacher, broaden children's vocabulary and their understanding of the world beyond their home. Key workers know each child well and quickly identify the next steps in their learning. They are less adept at doing that for the few children who are ready to be further stretched and challenged.

Children also grow in their independence. They learn how to put on their own coats, manage at lunch and take care of their belongings. By the time they leave, they are ready for the next stage of their education.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have planned the curriculum carefully across all areas of children's learning. They have clearly set out what they want children to know. They have planned the experiences children will have and the stories and rhymes they expose children to.

In mathematics, children begin with counting and recognising numbers before moving on to shape, space and measure later in the year. Well-chosen stories are repeated regularly and feed into different learning activities throughout the day. This helps them to know the stories well.

In sessions about feelings, in story time and in mathematics sessions, adults help children to listen and to join in. Staff help children learn the language they need. Songs, signing and pictures support children's communication throughout the day.

Teaching does not always extend children's speaking to the extent it could. Children speak with adults regularly, but do not yet speak with each other as much as they could. Children working beyond what is expected for their age are not always challenged to go further. This means that they are not always reaching their full potential.

Parents are partners in the learning. Staff share strategies for parents to use at home. They send books and discovery sheets out and welcome parents to workshops that enable them to even better support their child.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Children at Brearley Nursery School arrive each day to adults who know them and their families well. Their photographs sit on family trees in every room. The languages they speak at home appear on the walls.

Children feel safe. They say that the adults look after them. They enjoy coming to nursery. They speak with pride about visits to the farm and the nature reserve. They have opportunities to feed sheep on their trips. An artist and a music teacher come in each week to work alongside them.

Children take part in everything the nursery offers. Those who find busy rooms hard spend time in a smaller, quieter space. They join their friends outside and return to the larger rooms when they are ready. Children who do not yet use words are met with signing, pictures and puppets. Children learn to recognise and name their feelings. Parents say their children use the same words and pictures at home.

Children are calm. They follow the routines they have learned. They sing as they line up and as they walk downstairs. They eat lunch at tables where each child has a placemat with their name on it. The school cook prepares a hot meal for them each day. Children share toys and take turns. When they need a reminder, an adult is close by to help.

Children get out into the wider world. They visit the library. They mark a day to celebrate the different cultures in their nursery and their parents come in to share in this. They explore the woodland through forest school sessions. For some, going on a school visit is the first time they have travelled on a bus or a tram. For their families, the nursery is a place where they too feel welcomed and supported.

Next steps

- Leaders should develop adults' use of open questioning and modelling of peer-to-peer interactions so that children sustain conversations with each other and extend their thinking.
- Leaders should ensure that staff can identify when children are ready to be stretched and challenged in their learning, enabling them to make the best possible progress.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors is Nishma Patel.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with leaders, including the headteacher and nursery manager. They spoke to governors, including the chair of the governing body. They spoke with a number of staff during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Yewande Lawal

Lead inspector:

Aliki Constantopoulou, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Martina Abbott, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 12 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

112

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

0.0%

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

0.00%

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

25.00%

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

Location deprivation

Well above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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