

Inspection of Allens Croft Nursery School

Allens Croft Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham, West Midlands B14 6RP

Inspection dates:	28 and 29 January 2025
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Children are very happy at Allens Croft Nursery. They are provided with an exceptional start to their education. The school is highly ambitious for children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This stems from an exciting curriculum that skilled staff immerse the children in, helping them to achieve extremely well.

Children behave exceptionally well. This is because the school has consistently high expectations of their behaviour. From the moment they join they learn the importance of taking turns and cooperating. Staff capably guide children on how to manage their own feelings and behaviour.

The school promotes high levels of independence. Children confidently make their own choices about the activities they would like to engage in. Staff give children meaningful responsibilities, for example, older children helping younger children. The older children are known as the 'Nursery Experts'.

Staff get to know and understand each child. They gently and patiently show children how to do things. They encourage them to persist, help them to think through problems and challenge them to do more. Staff make strong connections with parents and families. They encourage and help parents to support their child at home. Parents value the school's work immensely.

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

The school's curriculum is meticulously designed. It sets out the key knowledge, skills and vocabulary the children need to learn from the moment they join the school. This enables staff to set highly purposeful learning activities. The needs, interests and development of children are built seamlessly into the curriculum. A seasonal and cultural calendar runs alongside the curriculum, connecting children's learning to the world around them.

Children have extremely positive attitudes. They help each other and work together to solve a problem. For example, a group of children built a giant beanstalk from recyclable materials. Supported by an adult, they developed vocabulary relating to height and safety. Other children were observed making a rocket ship. They made use of a bench to support cutting tape and putting the shapes together before deciding how to join them. They learned the names of the parts of the rocket, such as nose, cone and boosters.

Children's early communication and language skills are given the highest priority. Staff expertly listen to children as they talk and purposefully extend their vocabulary. Staff know that this repetition of key words supports children to learn and remember more. To support all children, they learn two signs a week to enable them to communicate their thoughts, feelings and ideas.

The school develops a love of reading across all age ranges. Children are immersed in stories, songs and rhymes. They share books with adults and use props and actions to

retell stories. Staff model reading books to the children. Even the youngest children independently choose to look at books, pointing excitedly to the pictures, eager for the adult to read to them. Leaders have carefully chosen the core books that children will access as part of the curriculum. These include deliberate choices that reflect and celebrate the diverse nature of the setting and the wider community.

Practitioners raise children's understanding of the sounds that letters make through activities such as listening games. They support children to identify the initial sound of objects and to segment words. As a result, children are ready to access phonics teaching in the primary settings.

The school has the same high expectations for children with SEND as they do for all others. Children with SEND are exceptionally well catered for, including those in the resource base. Adults tailor activities and the learning environment so that children with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers and achieve as well as they can.

Children behave very well indeed. Staff encourage them to be respectful and kind. Children take notice when staff explain to them how to behave sensibly. They play cooperatively and show obvious care for each other.

An abundance of learning opportunities is on offer for the children. Well-thought-out activities help them to learn about the world. Listening to current news helps the children learn about citizenship. Children take part in various events, both locally and nationally, such as a national gardening competition which helps them learn about growing food and the impact of climate on plants.

Governors are aware of their strategic role and their responsibilities. They offer challenge and support to leaders to maintain a high-quality curriculum. Staff at all levels feel highly supported. Leaders ensure that staff receive regular, high-quality professional development to teach the ambitious curriculum. Parents are highly positive about the work of 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

Unique reference number	103130
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10343720
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	142
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sean Delaney
Headteacher	David Aldworth
Website	www.allenscn.bham.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 June 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is one of nine nursery schools that form the Birmingham Federation of Maintained Nursery Schools.
- The executive headteacher is also responsible for another nursery school in the federation.
- The school provides full- and part-time places for children aged two to five years old.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a resource base for children with SEND.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form

provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, senior leaders and the special educational needs co-ordinator. Inspectors also met with a group of staff. The lead inspector also met with one of the local authority advisers and the educational psychologist.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: communication and language, personal, social, emotional development and expressive arts and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of sessions and spoke with teachers and children about their learning.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders about children's behaviour, attendance, policies and procedures. The inspectors observed children's behaviour.
- Inspectors reviewed information about the curriculum.
- The lead inspector met with those responsible for governance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed: the single central record; took account of the views of leaders and staff; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.
- The views of parents and staff were considered through discussions and looking at information collected from Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Lynda Townsend, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sally Snooks

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025