

Inspection of Highfield Nursery School

Wright Street, Chorley, Lancashire PR6 0SL

Inspection dates:	18 and 19 March 2025
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Children's happy faces show how much they love their school. Their days are filled with exciting opportunities to play and learn. Even the youngest two-year-old children cannot wait to take off their coats and immerse themselves in this wonderful environment. Children feel safe and secure in the excellent care that staff provide.

The school's aspirations for children's achievement are boundless. This is clearly evident for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children develop curiosity and a thirst for learning through the enticing activities that the school provides. They achieve extremely well from their very varied starting points.

Children's behaviour is excellent. The school's simple rules and routines are easy for them to understand. For example, children know when it is time to play and when it is time to tidy up. They listen carefully to staff's instructions at group times. These routines help to make the nursery a calm and reassuring place to be.

Children, including those with SEND, develop high levels of confidence and independence. They learn to take care of their own needs. For example, children learn to put on and take off their own coats and boots. They learn to wash their hands carefully when they have been to the toilet. They are extremely well prepared for primary school when the time comes.

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

The quality of education that children receive is simply exceptional. The school has a highly ambitious vision for what children should know and be able to do by the time that they start primary school. Following the last inspection, the school wasted no time in making some further refinements to its curriculum. The result is a strong, exciting curriculum that enables children to thrive and to succeed.

Meticulous care has been taken to break the curriculum down into clear, well-ordered steps that match children's developmental needs from the age of two to five. Staff teach these steps expertly. They are skilled at checking that children have understood new learning. Any misconceptions are swiftly and successfully addressed. The school's regular checks on children's learning help staff to make any necessary adjustments to their teaching.

The school has excellent working relationships with parents, carers and a wide range of professionals, such as those from health services. These relationships underpin the school's effective work to identify any children who may have SEND. Staff are adept at making careful adaptations so that children with SEND learn the curriculum successfully.

Communication and language are at the heart of the curriculum. Many children join the school when their language is at an early stage of development. Staff are highly skilled at using language in ways that help children to understand a variety of vocabulary and phrases. When necessary, staff use their expertise to employ additional methods of communication, such as pictures, symbols and signing. Regardless of their needs, children

develop strong language and communication skills, and they are well prepared for future learning.

Children develop extremely positive attitudes to their learning. They persevere when learning new skills and take delight in their own successes. Children are far too busy with their learning to misbehave.

The school works effectively with parents to foster positive attendance habits. Although children's attendance is not compulsory, most children come to school every day unless they are ill. This helps to ensure that they receive the maximum benefit from the excellent education and care that the school offers.

Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development permeates every aspect of school life. Children learn, in age-appropriate ways, to recognise differences and similarities among people. They learn to resolve any difficulties with kind words. These characteristics are likely to stand them in good stead when they transfer to primary school.

Governors challenge leaders well in order to successfully hold them to account for their work to improve the school. Leaders and governors are mindful of staff's workload when making decisions about the school. Staff appreciate leaders' concern for their well-being.

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	119067
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10337655
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	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Hellen Hull
Headteacher	Susan Conron Natalie Sinclair
Website	http://highfieldnurseryschoolchorley.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	14 November 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, an additional executive headteacher has been appointed to share the role, on a part-time basis, with the substantive executive headteacher.
- A new chair has been appointed to the governing body since the last inspection.
- Highfield Nursery School is federated with Duke Street Nursery School, which is also located in Chorley.
- The school takes children from two years old.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

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 discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school. The inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with governors virtually. She also met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors completed deep dives in communication and language, mathematics and understanding the world. They met with leaders, visited learning activities and spoke with some children. The inspectors also spoke with staff about the curriculum.
- The inspectors considered information about the curriculum in some other areas of learning.
- The inspectors reviewed the responses to an Ofsted staff survey and spoke with staff about their work at the school.
- The inspectors reviewed the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspectors also spoke with some parents at the beginning and end of the school day.
- 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.

Inspection team

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nicky Corfield

Ofsted Inspector

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