

Bilston Nursery School

Address: Wolverhampton Street, Bilston, West Midlands, WV14 0LT

Unique reference number (URN): 132018

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 ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Children make secure and sustained progress from their starting points. Many arrive with less developed skills in communication, physical development or personal independence. The school's focus on early language, emotional security and purposeful play helps children grow in confidence. They develop confident speaking and listening skills through daily interactions, stories, songs and conversations with adults, who model language clearly.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well because their needs are identified early and supported through tailored interventions. Staff work closely with families and external professionals to ensure that support is well matched to need and consistent. As a result, children with SEND develop confidence, independence and communication skills that prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Across the curriculum, children build the knowledge and skills that they need to be successful. They show increasing independence, an ability to manage their feelings, and a readiness for learning. Most children leave the setting very well prepared for their next steps, with the confidence and curiosity needed to succeed in Reception and beyond.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders place a clear emphasis on developing positive attendance habits from the earliest stage. Children enjoy coming to school and settle quickly into familiar routines that help them feel secure. Staff monitor attendance closely and work with families to understand any barriers that may affect regular attendance. Leaders act promptly when concerns arise and provide supportive guidance to help families establish consistent routines. Leaders build positive relationships with families and encourage regular engagement with the nursery. As a result, children attend well and benefit from the rich experiences on offer each day.

Children behave well and show positive attitudes to learning. They understand routines, follow expectations and treat one another with kindness and respect. Adults support children sensitively, helping them learn how to manage their emotions and solve problems in age-appropriate ways. The environment is calm and purposeful, with children engaging in play that promotes cooperation, turn taking and shared enjoyment. Staff respond quickly and consistently to any concerns, ensuring that children feel safe and supported. Children with additional behavioural needs receive tailored help so that they can take part fully in learning. Across the school, relationships are warm and trusting, creating an environment where children feel confident, valued and ready to learn.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

The curriculum is ambitious, carefully designed and rooted in purposeful play, high-quality interactions and rich experiences. Staff think deeply about what children need to learn and how best to support their development. They use their knowledge of child development to plan learning that builds securely over time and prepares children well for their next steps.

Teaching is responsive and thoughtful. Adults observe children closely and use what they notice to shape learning in the moment. They model language clearly, ask questions that extend thinking and give children time to explore ideas independently. This helps children develop communication, problem-solving and early reasoning skills. Staff adapt teaching skilfully so that all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, can take part and succeed.

The outdoor curriculum is a particular strength. Children have frequent opportunities to explore the natural world, develop physical skills and take part in activities that build their resilience and curiosity. This is especially important as many children start school with less advanced physical development. Staff plan outdoor learning with care so that it supports children's wider development and deepens their understanding of the world.

The curriculum is inclusive and ensures that every child can access meaningful learning. Staff use visual supports, structured routines and consistent expectations to help children feel secure and confident. Across the school, teaching promotes independence, engagement and enjoyment, helping children to achieve well.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Inclusion is central to the school's work and is evident in every aspect of daily life. Staff identify children's needs early, often before they join the setting, which ensures smooth transitions and timely support. Adults use a wide range of approaches to reduce barriers to learning, including visual communication, sensory activities and targeted interventions that help children take part fully in the curriculum.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive carefully tailored support from knowledgeable staff, who understand their needs well. They are included in all aspects of school life and learn alongside their peers with confidence. The specially resourced provision for children with SEND plays an important role in providing personalised support. Children benefit from the expertise of staff, who work closely with external professionals to ensure that help is well matched to each child.

The school supports disadvantaged children effectively and leaders use additional funding wisely. Staff build positive relationships with families and work closely with them to understand children's needs and provide the right help at the right time. This includes emotional support, communication development and access to wider opportunities that enrich children's experiences. Children who are known to social care receive sensitive and consistent support. Staff work with external agencies to ensure that these children feel safe, included and able to take part in learning.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders are passionate about providing the best possible experiences for children and place a clear emphasis on welfare, inclusion and high-quality early education. They know the community well and understand the needs of the children they serve. Leaders create a positive, family-focused culture where staff feel valued, supported and motivated. Professional development is well planned and helps staff build expertise in early years practice, communication development and inclusive approaches.

The school has highly positive relationships with parents, carers and the wider community. Leaders provide workshops, events and opportunities for families to take part in learning, which helps strengthen children's experiences at school and at home. The school also supports other settings by sharing expertise in early years practice. They also lead and coordinate transition work with other settings and local schools.

Governors understand the school's strengths and are committed to supporting its continued development. They visit regularly, engage with staff and provide constructive challenge across all aspects of the school's work. They meet their statutory duties and take an active role in ensuring that the school remains focused on children's wellbeing, learning and inclusion.

Leaders reflect carefully on their work and plan improvements that benefit children and families. Their commitment to continuous development ensures that the school remains a nurturing, inclusive and ambitious environment where children thrive.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Children's personal development and wellbeing sit at the heart of the school's work. Leaders create an environment where children feel safe, valued and confident to explore. Daily routines are calm, predictable and nurturing, helping children develop independence and emotional security. Staff support children sensitively during care routines, encouraging them to take increasing responsibility for tasks such as tidying, dressing and managing their belongings.

The personal development programme is rich and thoughtfully planned. Children learn about friendships, feelings and how to care for themselves and others. They take part in activities that build social skills, cooperation and confidence. Staff model positive behaviour and language, helping children learn how to share, take turns and solve problems together. Children develop a growing awareness of the wider world through visits to the local community and interactions with visitors, who share their experiences and expertise. All children benefit from this rich set of experiences. Parents and carers are invited to join trips and activities, strengthening the partnership between home and school.

The school promotes children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through stories, celebrations and opportunities to explore different traditions. Children learn about kindness, fairness and respect, and they begin to understand the importance of making safe choices. Staff teach these ideas in simple, age-appropriate ways that help children build early awareness of how to keep themselves safe.

The curriculum supports children to develop independence, resilience and curiosity. Activities are designed to encourage exploration, problem-solving and imaginative play. Children show pride in their achievements and enjoy sharing their learning with adults and friends.

Pastoral support is highly effective. Staff know children well and respond quickly to their emotional needs. Children feel listened to and cared for, which helps them develop

confidence and a positive sense of self. As a result, children thrive in a setting that nurtures their wellbeing and supports their personal growth.

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

Children experience a safe, warm and nurturing environment where they feel welcome from the moment they arrive. Familiar adults greet them with care and reassurance, helping them settle quickly into calm routines that build confidence and a sense of belonging. Children behave well and show increasing levels of focus as they take part in activities that capture their interest. They learn to share, take turns and work together, developing friendships and positive relationships with both staff and each other.

Children enjoy their learning and show curiosity as they explore the well-designed indoor and outdoor environments. These spaces are thoughtfully organised and accessible, allowing children to investigate, play and learn with growing independence. They take part in a wide range of exciting experiences, such as water play, outdoor role play and imaginative adventures like visiting dinosaur land. Trips and visitors broaden their understanding of the world and help them develop their interests and aspirations.

Adults know children extremely well and respond sensitively to their emotional, developmental and communication needs. This creates trusting relationships that support children to feel secure and ready to learn. Children sustain engagement in activities for increasing periods of time, particularly when exploring the natural world or taking part in purposeful play. They show pride in their achievements and enjoy sharing their learning with adults.

Children feel safe throughout the day. Routines, such as mealtimes and transitions, are calm, sociable and supportive of children's wellbeing. Staff encourage safe risk taking, helping children learn how to use equipment and spaces with care. Children attend regularly and enjoy coming to school, which helps them make the most of the rich experiences on offer. As a result, children thrive. They develop confidence, independence and resilience and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Next steps

- Leaders should sharpen their strategic evaluation by embedding a rigorous, consistent system for analysing and providing evidence of the impact of all actions, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, so that priorities are precisely targeted and lead to sustained, transformational outcomes.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors is Kathleen Rogers.

The school is part of a federation called Bilston and Eastfield Nursery Schools. The executive headteacher oversees both settings. There is a shared governing board for both settings.

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.

Inspectors spoke with the executive headteacher and other senior leaders. They also spoke with representatives from the governing body and the local authority.

The school caters for two-year-olds.

There is a specially resourced provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These children have a range of complex needs. The provision caters for 8 children between the ages of three and five.

The school does not use any alternative provision.

Executive headteacher: Emma Smith

Lead inspector:

Catherine Young, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Gill Turner, Ofsted Inspector

Reena Rai-Aheer, 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

177

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

6.21%

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

15.25%

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.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

Resourced provision and SEN unit

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

SLCN - Speech, language and Communication, ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder, MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (if applicable).

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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 <https://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 2026



© Crown copyright