

# Inspection of a good school: Little Hayes Nursery School

Symington Road, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 2LL

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Inspection date:

30 November 2022

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Every day is a 'wellies on' day; children are excited and curious to explore outside whatever the weather. Staff help children play alongside and with each other so that they learn how to become friends. Staff encourage children to try things out for themselves, but they are always there to provide a helping hand.

Children form warm relationships with their teachers and key workers. They settle quickly because effective routines are in place. This ensures that children feel safe. Registration and snack time build children's independence. Children learn how to listen and take turns because adults model this well. Children learn important self-care practices at the right time. For example, children learn how to put their coat and shoes on and to use the potty or toilet independently.

Children enjoy listening to stories and singing lots of nursery rhymes and songs. Children explore the many high-quality resources set out in the nursery. However, staff do not teach some children the depth of knowledge they need in some aspects of some areas of learning. This holds some children back in their learning and development.

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

The school meets the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage (EYFS). The interim executive headteacher is tightening operations to further improve curriculum quality and care practices. She is explicit in sharing her reasons for leading the necessary changes with staff. She has high expectations of what children should learn.

There have been recent changes to the organisation of the school day. Staff are starting to implement a better balance between child-initiated play, pre-arranged activities and

deliberate teaching. Children are learning more about their own feelings. They learn to be kind and helpful, for example, through 'tidy up time'.

The classrooms and outdoor areas are now clutter free and well-organised. Resources are clean and in good condition. Children navigate the learning spaces safely and with interest. They experience all seven areas of learning. The curriculum actively encourages them to take risks safely. There are lots of activities on offer to develop children's balance, spatial awareness and core strength. Staff prioritise stories right from the start. The introduction of core books consolidates and extends children's reading knowledge over time. Older children love re-enacting stories and using new vocabulary in their play.

However, leaders are only partway through delivering a substantial training programme for staff. This aims to provide all staff with expert subject knowledge so that they can deliver what the school calls its 'core curriculum offer' consistently. At the moment, there are some weaknesses in the delivery of the curriculum. Sometimes, staff do not identify when children can learn more. For example, in mathematics, staff do not have an explicit understanding of the small chunks of knowledge children should know in order to be ready for the Reception Year. As a result, some children do not progress through parts of the mathematics curriculum sufficiently well.

Staff support the development of children's communication, language and vocabulary across the curriculum. This is most effective for children at the early stages of speaking. Some staff interactions do not extend children's language precisely. This is holding back in their learning some children who already speak in three-word phrases or sentences. Leaders are taking action to resolve this, including by commissioning an expert to model best practice.

Leaders have put arrangements in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff use the advice they receive from experts such as speech and language and occupational therapists to deliver specific programmes. Leaders are ensuring that staff identify children's additional needs earlier now. However, this work is very recent. There are inconsistencies in how well staff use the information they have to shape curriculum content. On occasions, when children become unsettled, staff do not seek to understand what children are trying to communicate. When this happens, staff do not adapt the curriculum to ensure children can master what they need to learn next.

Staff and parental partnerships are effective. Parents are very positive about the school.

Leaders take staff workload into account. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, they did not hold leaders to account for addressing in full the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Children are safe. Staff care for them well. Intimate care is suitable. Staff's paediatric first-aid training is up to date. Safeguarding practices to identify and help children who may be

at risk of harm are secure. For example, staff are vigilant in raising and recording any concerns they have about a child's welfare or safety. Designated safeguarding leaders take swift and appropriate action to minimise children's risk of harm. They work well with the health service, social workers and other external agencies as necessary.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- There are weaknesses in the mathematics curriculum. Over time, governors did not hold leaders to account for resolving these weaknesses. Children do not learn the breadth of knowledge they should as they move through the curriculum. Leaders must ensure that all aspects of the mathematics curriculum have appropriate weighting so that children can learn all the essential knowledge they need in readiness for the Reception Year.
- Leaders' work to refine the school's curriculum and increase staff subject knowledge is in progress. There are weaknesses in some aspects and areas of learning and in how staff deliver them. Staff do not use all the information they have about what children know, or do not know, to plan onward learning. Some staff interactions are not as effective as they could be. Leaders must ensure that all staff have strong subject knowledge across the curriculum and that the weaknesses in curriculum delivery are resolved.
- Leaders' work to ensure that all staff apply strong subject knowledge when teaching children with SEND is at an early stage. This means that the curriculum content for some of these children is not always sufficiently precise. Governors must hold leaders to account for ensuring that all staff identify children's next steps precisely and that they adapt their teaching and interactions so that all children with SEND learn well.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2012.

## 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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	108895
<b>Local authority</b>	Bristol, City of
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211069
<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	92
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Maggie Whittle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jet Davis
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.littlehayes.org">www.littlehayes.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 December 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- In 2018, Little Hayes Nursery School federated with Speedwell Nursery School to form the Little Hayes and Speedwell Nursery Schools Federation.
- There is one interim executive headteacher, who leads both schools. She is seconded from another maintained nursery school in Bristol. There is a deputy headteacher based at each school. Some staff have leadership responsibilities across the federation.
- The interim executive headteacher took up her role in September 2022. She has worked at Speedwell Nursery School since September 2021.
- Little Hayes Nursery School is based on a single site which caters for two-, three- and four-year-old children.
- The school is required to meet the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage.
- A national leader of education (NLE) and the advisory lead EYFS teacher are supporting the school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the interim executive headteacher, deputy headteacher and other staff. An inspector held telephone conversations with a representative of the governing body, a representative of Bristol local authority and the NLE supporting the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language, physical development, mathematics and expressive arts and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, teachers and staff. Inspectors observed learning throughout the day and interacted with children.
- Inspectors considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted staff and pupil surveys alongside responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses from parents. An inspector also talked to parents and carers during the school day.

## Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Emma Jelley

Ofsted Inspector

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