

Greenfield Nursery School

Hurst Drive, Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire EN8 8DH

Inspection dates

25–26 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for children	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher's vision to provide a nurturing, inclusive and inspiring environment where children learn to be confident and enjoy learning is clearly evident. This is a happy and friendly school.
- Children are eager to come to school. They are excited to join in with the activities planned for them, showing a keen curiosity and interest, especially when tasks are physically demanding.
- Staff demonstrate high levels of care and ensure that children are safe. Children are taught to think about dangers, manage risk and understand the importance of good hygiene.
- Staff show children, through their interactions and role play, right from wrong. Consequently, children know how to behave in a variety of situations.
- Staff promote moral, social and cultural development well, offering children many opportunities to help and value others, preparing them for life in modern Britain.
- Children who speak little or no English are looked after particularly well, as are children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children's needs are assessed effectively and activities are closely tailored to raise their achievement. As a result, they make strong progress from their varying starting points.
- Leaders involve parents when using pupil premium funding so that support matches children's needs. Disadvantaged children make good progress in their acquisition of skills and in their social and emotional development.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. There is a strong drive to improve the school with regular review and consideration of best practice.
- Intensive staff training and an overhaul of the curriculum and the environment are paying dividends. Children enjoy imaginative activities that enthuse them and are encouraged to explore and discover. Outcomes are sharply rising, the quality of teaching is good and children make good progress in early reading, writing and number.
- While there is much investment in training and resources, the delivery of the phonics programme is not yet systematic. There is inconsistency, which hampers children learning to read. Not all staff make the most of conversation to develop children's language.
- Governors, including those new to the role, are passionately involved in supporting the school. Similarly, parents are most appreciative of the staff, who go 'above and beyond'.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that all teachers and early years practitioners:
 - develop children’s language by talking to children in full sentences and with a rich vocabulary
 - make full use of unplanned conversations to reinforce the quality of talk.
- Improve children’s reading by:
 - implementing a coherent phonics strategy so children advance in their knowledge of sounds and how they are used to create words
 - training staff so they have a better understanding of how to teach different sounds and how to develop children as readers and writers.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- 'Greenfields Nursery is a lovely and caring place', is one of the overwhelmingly positive comments made by parents via the Ofsted survey, Parent View. Since her appointment, the headteacher has placed the Nursery at the heart of the local community and forged very strong relationships so that parents are fully involved in the schooling of their child.
- The curriculum is finely tuned to the needs and backgrounds of families. For example, as part of a cultural celebration, a Chinese father and his child taught the children Chinese drumming. British values are also carefully considered and woven into children's activities. Displays in each classroom show children using these values.
- The views of parents are considered when making decisions about the expenditure of pupil premium funding. For example, parents requested cookery classes with their children to learn nutrition and how to cook healthy meals together at home. These have been most successful in developing children's understanding of the world and physical development.
- Since taking up her post, the headteacher has introduced more detailed procedures for monitoring children, their social and emotional development and their learning. Using this information, planning is continually adapted to meet individual needs, preferences and interests. For example, staff arranged for a group of boys to visit a local building site. Careful planning contributes to the good progress that most children make in early learning, such as understanding the world, as well as in early reading, writing and mathematics.
- Checks carried out on the quality of teaching are systematic and effective. Leaders work closely with staff to evaluate where teaching can be improved. Regular observations and consideration of children's learning journals ensure that staff deliver the full curriculum and accurately assess children's knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Staff are highly appreciative of the array of training they have undertaken to sharpen their practice. They say that the focus on improving the quality of their interactions with children is helping them to be more conscious about what they are saying and how they talk with children. Nonetheless, high-quality talk with children is not yet routine for all early years practitioners.
- Funding for children with SEND is used well. This includes providing individual resources and staff training. All staff use the same approaches so that children's learning is reinforced. For example, they use visual cues, pictures and sign language to convey meaning. This means that even those children with complex needs can follow routines, such as washing and drying their hands, by a series of pictures.
- The local authority has provided excellent support to governors and the headteacher. Detailed reports of actions taken and recommendations for improvement have helped leaders gain an effective view of the school. The sharing of best practice has also had a positive impact, with staff gaining a clear view of what works and what does not.

Governance of the school

- Governors bring a wide range of experience to their roles. They are very active, with regular visits that pinpoint areas for improvement. Their contributions are also informed by their reading. Governors enjoy reading research on the best methods for early years education. For example, one governor read about providing children with the opportunity to make choices and discussed this with the headteacher when considering the curriculum. This means that they have informed views when agreeing a vision for the school as well as when they ask challenging questions of leaders.
- Governors are ambitious for the school. They want children to settle in well, enjoy coming to school and be socially and academically prepared for primary school. Consequently, they regularly reflect on their practice and undertake training, in areas such as safeguarding, to ensure that they are up to date. They also check that improvements are sustained through seeking external views in addition to those of staff and parents.
- Governors have recently improved financial management by restructuring staffing to achieve greater value for money. After this process, they checked that the changes to staffing had not had an adverse effect on staff well-being or motivation. They also check that the pupil premium grant is spent wisely. They keep a close eye on whether spending on projects or training for staff are having a positive impact.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are vigilant in ensuring that children remain safe. They are well trained, including completing safeguarding courses online, and know how to identify any signs that children are at risk. They understand the systems for reporting concerns and they appreciate the regular briefings they receive from the headteacher. Leaders accurately maintain safeguarding records and ensure that any child protection referrals are monitored closely.
- Leaders regularly review the quality of safeguarding arrangements, involving the safeguarding governor as appropriate. Reports and actions are monitored by the full governing body.
- All staff have a healthy attitude to risk, which is preparing children to understand how to stay safe. For example, children are encouraged to use the resources in the outdoor area independently, such as playing with sand and the toy equipment. Children have been taught to ride the trikes safely. During the inspection, one boy fell off and his friend helped him by righting his trike and asking if he was OK. The boy brushed himself down and got back on his trike.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Staff have a good understanding of how young children learn and they use this knowledge to plan imaginative experiences for children, both indoors and outdoors. The focus on giving children choices in their play is helping children to develop independence as well as be creative in their thinking. For example, children will often

use role play to express their ideas.

- Teachers observe children closely to assess their skills. They share findings in planning meetings to monitor progress and assess the next steps for the children's learning. Detailed records are kept of children's choices to support planning. This helps children become keen learners, as they are able to follow their own interests and look at what excites them.
- Children with SEND are taught in smaller groups so that adults can offer higher levels of direct support. Guided by adults, they learn to take turns and to listen to one another. They respond well to physical play, such as discovering where the water goes down a chute or mixing colours to produce new colours. One child's face of delight when she made purple was a picture. A range of resources are used to help engage children, such as instruments and songs, as well as to help calm children, ready for learning.
- Since the previous inspection, staff have developed their skills in planning for the most able children. Teachers plan a range of interesting and demanding activities, which help engagement. Certain activities are tailored according to children's needs and abilities, such as letting children take care of watering the plants and flowers and discussing what happens.
- There are many opportunities for children to show understanding of the stories they read together in group sessions. For example, in one class, children were required to retell a familiar story with picture prompts effectively. In addition, stories are used to make connections across the curriculum. This reinforces children's understanding. For example, children heard about the life cycle of butterflies and subsequent activities linked to exploring this concept, such as recognising a cocoon. Later on, children were encouraged to link their actions in a yoga session to the butterflies coming out of their cocoons.
- Enjoyment of reading is a priority. Children relish the opportunity to snuggle up with a story. Several children were observed during the course of the inspection bringing books to an adult to read. Children listen with fascination as adults read to them in their key groups. Children who speak little or no English are well supported in their understanding of stories through repetition of key phrases accompanied by gestures.
- Less successful is the teaching of phonics. Not all staff pronounce sounds correctly or show children how to make the correct mouth movement to produce the sounds. This hampers children's learning of how to break words down into smaller sounds that they can then match to letters in the alphabet.
- Staff have focused their attention on improving the quality of their talk with children. This is currently being developed. There are examples of good questioning and conversations that draw out learning. For example, a discussion about the building of towers and how wide the base was developed children's mathematical understanding. However, some staff miss the moment to step in and extend responses or to correct mispronunciation or to teach new words.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote children's personal development and welfare is good. Children are taught well the skills of socialising, such as sitting down to eat food and how to tidy up after themselves. They are confident in approaching visitors and are happy to talk to them about what they are doing.
- Leaders know children well and, as a result, work effectively with parents to provide support for their children's needs. Parents told inspectors about the support they received and the fact that 'it is a lovely and caring place'. In particular, parents who have children with SEND are appreciative of staff who have taught them how to sign, as well as use picture cards to help develop communication.
- Children concentrate for sustained periods at self-chosen and adult-directed tasks. They also explore taking activities in other directions. For example, one child enjoyed modelling a dough lollipop, pretended to eat the lollipop and then extended his play into pretending to eat dinner with his family.
- Children are used to well-established routines and happily move freely between spaces from activity to activity without any prompting. They like to experiment with resources, dressing up so they look the part they are playing, or using musical instruments while they are singing.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of children is good. Most children are interested in the activities they choose to do. Where this is not the case, it is due to the organisation of the activities. For example, too many noisy activities taking place near to a reading session distracted the children who were trying to listen to the adult.
- The behaviour of children is typically well managed, as adults show children how to behave. For example, children were asked whether they were happy to sit in the sunshine or whether they were too hot. Children are also shown how to take turns by adults saying, 'your turn, my turn', which children then repeat.
- Children respond well, as adults are clear with expectations, such as, 'We say thank you.' On occasion, adults will also use the characters from a story to teach morals. One example was where a character spoke about the importance of having kind hands. As a result, children are learning to play together well and they are starting to share.
- Attendance is not statutory at this age, but leaders have worked hard to improve the attendance of disadvantaged children. As a result of the exciting environment and a strong focus on good attendance, children are motivated to attend regularly. They are rewarded for very good attendance with certificates and displays promote attendance to parents. Instilling such habits at an early age is getting children ready for the rigours of primary school.

Outcomes for children

Good

- When they join the Nursery, many children have weak skills in speaking and listening and in their personal and social development. Over time, children make good progress in most areas of learning, including early reading, writing and mathematics. Since the appointment of the headteacher, the number of children reaching the typical expectations for their age has more than doubled.
- Children's progress in developing their spoken language is a little slower than in other areas, such as expressive arts and design or physical development.
- The curriculum for the most able children is well considered. There are opportunities for them to develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills at the same time as their thinking. As a result, they are progressing well.
- This is also the case for children with SEND and for those who speak little or no English. A range of strategies are used to help with learning English and to give support to those with particular social and emotional needs. Children's interests are used to create a familiar and safe environment. For example, one child who likes ice cream was encouraged to act out being in an ice cream shop. Children with SEND progress well towards their own goals according to their needs and grow in independence.
- Children, including disadvantaged children, are highly interested in stories and books. They hear stories frequently throughout the day and have dedicated storytelling time. Children use these stories in their own imaginative play and emergent writing.
- Leaders have not yet established or implemented a high-quality approach to the teaching of phonics. A mix of approaches and styles, coupled with some weak subject knowledge, leads to inconsistent practice. As a result, children are restricted in their ability to match the letters to the different sounds they make. This delays their ability to segment to spell or blend to read key words.
- As a result of improvements with planning, more imaginative teaching and more rigorous systems to monitor children's progress, children are ready for their move to Reception classes and are socially and emotionally well prepared for learning in their new primary schools.

School details

Unique reference number	117067
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10053033

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of children	2 to 4
Gender of children	Mixed
Number of children on the school roll	147
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reggie Enti
Headteacher	Deborah Harrison
Telephone number	01992 760 779
Website	www.greenfieldnursery.co.uk
Email address	admin@greenfield.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 February 2018

Information about this school

- Greenfield Nursery includes within its provision a pre-school and wraparound provision. There is a Children's Centre on site with an outside lead agency. The Nursery takes children from two to four years old and is open from 8:00am to 3:30pm, 38 weeks of the year, Monday to Friday. The Nursery children access their free entitlement of 15 hours. The school has made provision for 30-hour provision for up to 20 families who meet the criteria.
- Approximately 40% of children speak a language other than English, and 15 different languages are spoken at the Nursery. Some children have little or no English and are supported by adults who speak their native language.
- Approximately a third of children are disadvantaged children who are eligible for early years pupil premium funding.
- A small proportion of children have been identified with SEND.

- The current headteacher was appointed in September 2017.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. Some observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- During visits to lessons, inspectors spoke to children and looked at learning journals to find out more about how well they were learning.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The lead inspector discussed the Nursery's effectiveness with a representative from the local authority.
- Discussions were also held with the headteacher, the Nursery's class leaders, teachers and early practitioners who had joined the school in the past three years.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation. This included policies, the headteacher's evaluation of the Nursery's effectiveness, the Nursery's improvement plans, safeguarding records, and information about attendance, attainment and progress.
- Inspectors considered 33 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also met with a group of parents and spoke to parents when they dropped off their children at the Nursery.

Inspection team

Liz Smith, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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