

Inspection of a good school: Cambridge Nursery School

Cambridge Road, Bootle, Bootle, Merseyside L20 9LQ

Inspection date: 19 October 2021

Outcome

Cambridge Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children flourish at Cambridge Nursery School where each child is treated as a unique individual. Leaders want and expect children to succeed academically. Children live up to these high expectations and achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children are happy and enjoy being at school. This is evident from the big smiles on their faces which rarely waiver throughout the day.

Children feel safe and they are safe. They want to learn. Classrooms and outdoor play areas are exciting places for children to learn. Play areas, both indoors and outside, are well resourced and children have ample room to move around safely and in comfort. Resources are stored within easy reach of the children, which allows them to make independent choices about their play.

Right from the start, children are taught the importance of sharing and of being kind to one another. Children are polite, well mannered and behave well. As children play, firm friendships are being formed. Inspectors observed no signs of bullying.

Relationships at all levels are respectful. Staff are positive role models to the children and are attentive to their needs. They lead by example and children follow.

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

The headteacher knows her school well. She has a clear overview of what the school does well and what needs to improve. She and her staff want to give children the very best start to their education. Governors are supportive of the headteacher. However, they do not challenge her effectively to improve the quality of education.

Children, including those with SEND, achieve well across the curriculum. Staff plan children's learning effectively and link it to their interests. Staff know what to teach children and the order in which it should be taught. They understand what children need to know before they move them on to more complex learning. The headteacher has

invested in her staff. They have accessed a wide range of training to keep their knowledge and skills fresh and up to date. Leaders make regular checks to ensure that the curriculum is being delivered as they intended.

Staff take every opportunity to develop children's speech and language skills. There is a real buzz of conversation around the school. As children play, staff introduce new and exciting words to support the acquisition of language. Poor behaviour rarely disrupts learning. Children are busy and have no time to squabble.

Children enjoy reading. Staff talk confidently about the different types of books that children read. The teaching of phonics starts as soon as children enter the school. Staff keep a close eye on the progress that children make and provide extra support to any children who start to fall behind.

Children enjoy looking at books on their own or listening to stories as part of a group. Staff strive to make story times engaging and fun. Book areas are warm and cosy. Children handle books with care and turn the pages correctly.

Although non-statutory, the headteacher strives to promote good attendance. However, there are a significant number of children who do not attend school on a regular basis. Some children arrive at school late. This prevents children from learning as much as they should.

The partnership that the school has with some parents and carers is not as strong as it could be. This prevents these parents from taking an active part in their children's learning. That said, parents who spoke with inspectors hold the school in high regard.

Children with SEND have their needs met well. With additional support from staff and extra resources, children access the same learning opportunities as their friends. Staff work well with outside agencies to ensure that children with SEND get the help that they need.

Children are developing an awareness of the world around them. They learn about faiths and cultures that are different to their own. Children enjoy visits to places of local interest, such as shops, a local library and the zoo. These trips have now restarted since the school reopened to all children. Children are gaining an appreciation of difference. For example, they are taught about same-sex families in an age-appropriate and meaningful way.

Staff work well as a team and morale is high. They appreciate that the headteacher and governors do all they can to support their well-being and work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is given high priority at this school. Staff have a secure understanding of safeguarding procedures and can spot pupils who may be at risk from harm. Any

concerns are diligently followed up. Staff ensure that vulnerable families get the support that they need in a timely manner.

Children are becoming aware of how to keep themselves safe. They are developing an understanding of how to keep safe when online and when crossing the road. Staff also reinforce the importance of not talking to strangers.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The level of challenge that governors offer to the headteacher is not as high as it could be. Governors need to ensure that they ask challenging and probing questions about all aspects of the school's work, but with a particular focus on the quality of education. This is so that the quality of education improves further and that children are even better prepared for their transition into primary school.
- There are a significant number of children who do not attend school regularly. Others are not punctual. School leaders need to think of more innovative ways of supporting children to come to school on a regular basis and to arrive on time. This is so that attendance and punctuality do not impede children's learning and development.
- Relationships with some parents are not strong. Leaders need to reach out to these parents to encourage them to take a more active part in their children's learning so that they can achieve more. This will also give these parents a deeper understanding of what their children are learning and how they learn.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good school could now be better than good, or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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

Unique reference number	104847
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	10199913
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	76
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Julie Cliff
Headteacher	Debbie Clark
Website	www.cambridgenurseryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	6 July 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use 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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and members of staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding and governors' minutes. Inspectors also spoke to staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed children's behaviour in class and in the outdoor play areas. They also spoke with staff about their well-being and workload.
- Inspectors talked with parents as they dropped their children off at school. They also considered the responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. There were no responses to the staff or pupil questionnaires.

- Inspectors conducted deep dives into early reading, mathematics and personal, social and emotional development. Inspectors spoke with subject leaders and teachers. They visited lessons and looked at examples of children’s work. The lead inspector observed children reading with a familiar adult. Inspectors also considered the planning of the curriculum in other areas of learning.

Inspection team

Sheila Iwaskow, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Julie Barlow

Her Majesty's Inspector

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