

Inspection of a good school: Freshfield Nursery School

42 Mauldeth Road, Heaton Mersey, Stockport, Cheshire SK4 3NB

Inspection date: 23 July 2024

Outcome

Freshfield Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children thrive at Freshfield Nursery School. They arrive at school each day happy and excited to see their friends. They receive a warm welcome from staff, who know them well. They know that adults will help and care for them should they become upset or worried.

Children behave well. They are polite, respectful and well mannered. They confidently and clearly voice their needs and emotions. They play happily together and engage with each other and with staff in a positive way.

The school has high expectations for children's achievement. Children are enthused by their learning. They are curious, have high levels of concentration and take great pride in their achievements. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are prepared well for the next stage in their education.

Children immerse themselves in outdoor learning. They benefit from the many opportunities that they have to explore the natural world around them. For example, they gain first-hand experiences of minibeads and the life cycles of frogs and butterflies in the pond area. They enjoy toasting marshmallows on a campfire, using a range of tools and equipment and climbing trees. These varied experiences help children to develop resilience, perseverance and teamwork skills.

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

The school has designed a broad and rich curriculum. It has identified the important knowledge and vocabulary that it wants children to acquire by the time they leave the school. Staff check what children know and can do and use this information to shape future learning and choices of activity.

However, in some areas of the curriculum, including the provision for two-year-old children, the school has not clearly defined the small steps of learning over time. This

means that in these areas, some children do not learn all that they should. In most areas of the curriculum, children, including those with SEND, benefit from meaningful activities that help them to learn the curriculum well. The environment fully supports the ambitious curriculum and provides plentiful opportunities for children to play, explore and be creative.

Generally, staff model language effectively, teach children new vocabulary and give them opportunities to practise using new words and language in creative ways. However, in some areas of the curriculum, staff do not provide enough opportunity for high-quality back-and-forth interactions to help children to talk about their learning.

The school identifies children who have additional needs early. Staff know children well and have forged positive relationships with parents and carers. They support children with SEND effectively so that they can follow the same curriculum as their classmates.

The school has prioritised the curriculum for communication, language and literacy. It has identified core texts, rhymes and vocabulary that it wants children to become familiar with. The environment is rich in books which are accessible for children to choose, share and enjoy. Children engage well with singing and story-time sessions. They join in with great enthusiasm and repeat words, phrases and rhymes. The school has established an effective phonics curriculum. Children, including those with SEND, successfully learn to distinguish sounds and recognise syllables. This helps to prepare them for the Reception Year.

Children, including two-year-olds, follow well-established routines. For example, they learn how to tidy up, put their lunchbox on the trolley, take out their snack and organise their belongings. Staff help children to develop skills such as taking turns, listening to others and sharing. The school has prioritised attendance. It works successfully with parents to establish positive attendance habits in readiness for the next stage in their child's education.

The school has developed a curriculum that supports children's wider development. There are many opportunities embedded in the curriculum that help children to develop a sense of independence and responsibility. For example, some children are eco-monitors. They recycle food waste, make bird boxes and count and observe bees and birds. The school celebrates difference. Children learn about faiths, cultures and beliefs that are different to their own.

In recent years, the school has taken significant steps to develop the curriculum to ensure that staff are clear about what knowledge and vocabulary to teach. During this period of curriculum review, the school has considered staff's workload to make sure that they have the time that they need to focus on their teaching. The school has developed strong partnerships with parents and the local community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some areas of the curriculum, including in the provision for two-year-old children, the school has not identified the small steps of learning that children should acquire. This means that some children do not learn all that they should. The school should ensure that the curriculum clearly sets out the knowledge and vocabulary that children should learn and when they should learn them.
- In some areas of the curriculum, staff do not ensure that children talk about their learning. This hinders some from achieving as well as they should. The school should ensure that staff develop better skills in engaging children in conversations about what they are doing and why.

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 2014.

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	106021
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10347999
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	125
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jill Jones
Headteachers	Jennifer Martin Elizabeth Richardson
Website	www.freshfield.stockport.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has provision for two-year-old children.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, early years leader and other leaders of the school. They also spoke with a range of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with three governors, including the chair of the governing body. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses from the Ofsted survey for staff. There were no responses to the Ofsted survey for pupils.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors observed children's behaviour at breaktimes, during lessons and around the school. They also spoke with children about their experiences at the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in communication, language and literacy, personal, social and emotional development and understanding the world. They met with subject leaders and staff, and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors spoke with children about their learning in these subjects. They looked at examples of children's work and learning.

Inspection team

Sally Timmons, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jackie Stillings

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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