

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Emneth Nursery School

Hollycroft Road, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE14 8AY

Inspection date: 8 October 2024

Outcome

Emneth Nursery School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children arrive happily at this appealing nursery school. They are calm and confident because staff provide them with expert support and guidance. Children and staff have trusting relationships. This is important because it helps the children to feel safe and secure. Children know that adults will help them when they need it.

Staff have high expectations for children. Children live up to this. They behave very well and achieve highly. The carefully designed tasks they engage in build their skills and knowledge. Staff ensure children learn an ever-increasing vocabulary and become more self-assured. As a result, children are prepared exceptionally well for primary school.

Children are settled and know the routines. Familiar songs help children recognise when session times change. This means that transition times are calm and efficient. As a result, the school maximises learning time.

Staff help children to develop important independence skills. For example, children know how to get the right resources for each task. The indoor and outdoor spaces are extremely well-designed to attract children's attention, engage their interest and develop essential life skills.

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

The school's curriculum sets out the skills and knowledge children need to learn from birth to age five. Staff understand the developmental steps required and the order in which children need to achieve them. For example, children must develop a strong hand grip to

draw well. The well-trained staff support this development during various activities. For instance, children can participate in activities that develop grip strength during outdoor time.

Staff know children's current developmental stage very well. As a result, they can identify those areas children need to work on and what they should learn next. Any children who need extra support to catch up with their peers receive this. For instance, they may get extra practice to help them say letter sounds more clearly. Additionally, some children participate in fun sessions that help them practise taking turns and sharing with their friends. The school places the highest priority on preparing children to be ready for their next stage of learning and they achieve this remarkably well.

All learning sessions focus on helping children to develop their communication and language skills. Exciting and well-considered learning environments mean that children want to communicate. Staff enable this by modelling the language that children could and should use. Staff-led small-group sessions help children learn to listen attentively. This means that even the youngest children make excellent progress towards school readiness.

The school works closely with the day care provider to identify any additional needs that children may have before they start. This ensures that children can promptly receive extra teaching sessions if needed. All children have many positive interactions with staff during their sessions. These interactions increase if children find it harder to stay on task or need more adult help because they are less confident. Consequently, all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make rapid progress through the curriculum.

Children behave well and cooperate, displaying resilience and teamwork. For example, some children collaborated to construct a model of the Eiffel Tower. At the same time, others allowed their peers to apply bandages to their legs and arms.

Many enrichment tasks help children learn more about the wider world. For example, when children go on outings, they learn to be safe in the community. Children can express their feelings well because staff teach them to understand their emotions in a way that is appropriate for their age.

Staff are proud to work at Emneth. They have manageable workloads, and their well-being is a top priority. Leaders provide excellent training to ensure staff have the necessary skills to deliver a high-quality education for the children. Parents and carers speak highly of the support provided to their children. Governors support leaders. They also complete key checks, like ensuring the recruitment of safe staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in May 2019.

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	120765
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10345216
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	64
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sarah Fairbrother
Headteacher	Claire Hooker
Website	www.emneth-nur.norfolk.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a different headteacher since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher. The lead inspector met with some representatives from the governing body, including the chair. The Ofsted Inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors visited the nursery classroom and outside area, spoke to staff and children and looked at samples of children's work.

- 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.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also considered the online staff survey.

Inspection team

Jessie Linsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ryan Freeman

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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