

Inspection of Ashworth Nursery School

Addison Close, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 1QU

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 March 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Children are happy at this school. They make new friends easily and develop trusting relationships with staff. Children talk openly about how they feel because staff teach them the words to use to express their emotions. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are ably supported and fully included in the planned activities by nursery staff and visiting professionals.

Children are comfortable, relaxed and safe at school. They behave sensibly. This is because staff help children to understand what adults expect of them. Staff deal gently, but effectively, with children when they forget to be kind to one another. The children were polite towards visiting inspectors, even telling them of their long trips on holiday to Pakistan.

Children take part in learning activities with confidence. They know that staff will help them to play and explore. Children enjoy special activities, such as learning outdoors on 'welly Wednesday'. They relish special story times, when parents and carers come along to listen to stories with their children.

Children learn well across most areas of learning. Staff have high expectations for children's learning. Children's learning of new words, as well as learning about books and the sounds that letters make, is a particular strength. Children move to primary school ready for the next stage of their learning.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all children to become active, confident and knowledgeable learners. In some areas of learning, leaders have established a high-quality curriculum where children are taught important knowledge in a logical order. However, in other areas of learning, the curriculum is still developing.

Leaders have made a very strong start in their work to refresh the curriculum. However, they are still in the process of identifying the essential knowledge that they want children to learn, in some areas of learning. Despite the changes leaders are making to the curriculum, all children, including those with SEND and those who speak English as an additional language, continue to develop well in the majority of the areas of learning. That said, there are times when some children do not learn all that they could.

Leaders make sure that staff understand and implement the requirements of the government's revised early years foundation stage framework. For instance, leaders have modified the way in which staff assess children's learning. Staff get to know individual children's needs and abilities without completing excessive paperwork. They are able to identify and support pupils who may have additional needs. Staff successfully use assessment information to plan future learning.

Leaders have established a clear focus on developing children's communication and language, including for children with SEND. Staff carefully consider each child's ability to speak and listen. They educate children by using programmes of meaningful, well-planned activities. Staff teach children to speak clearly and confidently. They help children to learn and use new and important words about themselves, to express their ideas and to discuss the world around them. However, a minority of staff do not capitalise on opportunities to broaden children's understanding and knowledge through carefully considered, well-planned conversations. They miss opportunities to deepen children's understanding of some areas of learning.

The teaching of early reading is a strength of the school. Leaders make certain that staff understand when and how to begin teaching children the sounds that letters make. They ensure that staff use well-thought-out curriculums for phonics and for teaching stories and nursery rhymes. When required, teachers give children the extra support that they need to catch up quickly in their learning of phonics. Leaders enable staff to access valuable training about early reading. They give parents clear and helpful guidance on how they can further enhance children's early reading at home.

There is a buzz about learning around the school. Children take part in learning activities with little distraction or disruption. Where individual children need extra help to manage their own feelings and behaviour, staff skilfully and sensitively support them.

Leaders and staff quickly and successfully establish positive relationships with children. This helps children to settle effectively at school. Staff build skilfully on these relationships to celebrate children's culture and language. They teach children about the differences between different people and communities. Leaders ensure that children learn through a carefully considered personal development programme of special events and activities. This includes learning about the need to provide food to those who have less than others and the importance of charitable fundraising.

Governors use their expertise effectively. They support and challenge leaders in their work to improve the curriculum. Leaders work successfully with governors, with other local schools and through engaging in research projects to develop the quality of education further for pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, governors and staff recognise and act on the possible safeguarding risks to children. Leaders and staff listen closely to what children say about their feelings and experiences. They respond quickly to any changes in children's behaviour or physical appearance. They make sure that children remain safe and protected from harm.

Leaders provide staff with regular access to training on safeguarding. Staff help children to know how to stay safe, such as understanding how to behave when walking near roads. Leaders provide parents with lots of information to help them to know how to help children to stay safe when using the internet at home. Governors carefully and regularly review leaders' work to safeguard children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some important aspects of the school's curriculum are in the process of being developed. Leaders aim to pinpoint the essential knowledge that children must learn. This is because some children do not learn all that they could while at the nursery. Leaders should continue with their work to identify the essential knowledge that staff will teach in all their planned learning for children. They must embed their new curriculum within the next 12 months.
- A minority of staff do not capitalise on opportunities to deepen children's learning through carefully structured conversations. This means that, at times, children do not learn as much as they should. Leaders should train all staff to support and deepen children's learning further.

The transitional arrangements were used on this inspection to confirm that the pupils benefit from a good quality education.

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	119091
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10212238
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	72
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dave Harling
Headteacher	Victoria Burnside
Website	www.ashworthnursery.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not use any alternative provision for children.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher and all teaching staff are newly appointed.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors completed deep dives in these areas of learning: early reading, communication and language, mathematics and physical development. They met with leaders, visited learning activities, reviewed children's work and spoke with staff and children. Inspectors also listened to children and staff reading books together.

- Inspectors considered a range of information about the work of leaders, governors and staff to safeguard children.
- Inspectors spoke with parents about their experiences of the school. There were no responses available through Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors talked with children in the classroom about their learning. There were no responses to the Ofsted pupil survey.
- Inspectors spoke with all staff and considered their responses to an Ofsted survey.
- The lead inspector met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also met remotely with two representatives of the local authority.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sue Eastwood

Her Majesty's Inspector

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