Inspection of Castleway Nursery School

Castleway North, Moreton, Wirral, Merseyside CH46 1RN

Inspection dates:	24 and 25 September 2024
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is a happy, friendly place to attend as a child and to look for support as a parent or carer. This is because it notices and values each individual person. The school successfully teaches children that everyone is equal and has a right to be valued by others and to be themselves. Children's positive behaviour indicates that they feel safe. They settle and thrive because of the caring, high-quality relationships that staff establish with them.

Due to the school's high expectations, children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. They gain new skills and knowledge from the learning activities and support that staff thoughtfully provide. Children love coming to school, not least to learn how to care for the school hens, last year named 'Nugget' and 'Popcorn' by the children.

Children, including two-year-olds, learn to be physically active. For example, they learn to swing themselves on a tyre-and-rope swing in the school's woodland area. Children learn too about the importance of eating healthy food such as fruit. Encouraged and supported by staff, children learn that peeling one's own fruit and tidying up are also important responsibilities. In this way, they learn essential skills for life.

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

As a result of significant attention by the school, including the governing body, the quality of education, leadership and management have improved markedly since the previous inspection. Children at the school, including two-year-olds, now experience a well-thought-out curriculum. This enables them to develop much of the knowledge that they need to become successful learners. For instance, children become skilful mathematicians and artists.

The school thinks carefully about which activities are best suited to help children remember key knowledge. Children enjoy their learning, including the school's well-chosen stories and nursery rhymes. Mostly, they build their knowledge and passion for communicating and expressing ideas. However, sometimes the school does not ensure that staff use language and questions effectively to deepen children's understanding of its curriculum. At these times, some children learn less well.

Staff act thoughtfully so that all children, including those who find speech and language difficult, have the opportunities that they need to take part in meaningful play and conversation. Consequently, children become confident communicators, able to hold meaningful conversations with others.

The school has successfully redesigned its approach to checking children's learning. Staff consider carefully whether children know and remember the school's curriculum. Staff make effective use of this information to decide on the next steps in children's learning. Most of the time, children learn the content of the curriculum securely.

Fostered by staff's respectful and sensitive support, children learn that kindness and self-control are important behaviours. They listen to staff and learn to follow instructions. Children's positive behaviour means that staff are focused on teaching, as well as supporting children's learning.

The school identifies the needs of children with SEND early. It works closely with parents and with wider professionals to ensure that effective support is put in place. Children with SEND achieve well.

The school enriches children's development with a carefully considered programme of opportunities and experiences. For example, children learn about the important work of the local police and fire brigade. The school also makes sure that children develop their knowledge of different faiths and festivals. It ensures that children are suitably prepared for their lives as citizens of modern Britain.

The school supports staff with valuable training and advice. It considers their workload when making key decisions. The governing body uses its skills and expertise effectively to support and challenge the work of the school.

The school supports parent's skills and confidence by providing them with information and guidance. These positive links with parents benefit children's learning at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasion, the school does not ensure that some staff use language and questions carefully to support and extend children's thinking. At these times, children develop their knowledge of the curriculum less well. The school should ensure that all staff have the expertise that they need to support children's learning of the curriculum.

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	104985
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10337625
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	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mark Melvin
Headteacher	Stuart Mycroft
Website	www.castleway.wirral.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 June 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school includes a class for two-year-olds.
- The school does not use alternative provision for children.
- The school is federated with a primary school. Both schools are led by one executive headteacher and share a governing body. Some staff work across both schools. Since the previous inspection, the school has moved its location to share premises with the primary school.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other leaders, a representative of the local authority and an external consultant to discuss the work of the school.
- The lead inspector met with some members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and children; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.
- The inspectors completed deep dives in communication and language, expressive art and design and physical development. They visited activities that involved these and some other areas of learning, including in the school's woodland area. Inspectors spoke with the school about its curriculum. They spoke with some children about their learning.
- The inspectors spoke with staff about working at the school. There were no responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- There were no responses to review from Ofsted's survey for pupils.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspectors spoke with some parents, including at a school coffee morning.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Victoria Burnside	His Majesty's Inspector

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