

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Ilminster Avenue Nursery School

Ilminster Avenue, Knowle West, Bristol BS4 1BX

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 November 2024

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a friendly and inclusive place at the heart of the community it serves. Children receive a warm welcome from staff, which helps them to settle quickly. Staff know and meet children's individual needs well.

The school has high expectations for what all children can achieve. Children enjoy their learning. They show high levels of curiosity. From the age of two, most children develop the language and social skills they need to become successful learners. Many are well prepared for the next stage of their education because of this.

Staff take time to form positive and caring relationships with children. Children know why it is important to be kind and considerate of others. They respond well to the routines that are in place. As a result, there is a calm and purposeful environment, both in and outside classrooms.

The school offers a range of opportunities to support children's personal development. Children learn why it is important to eat healthy food and how to use tools safely. When outside, they develop their understanding of teamwork. Children take pride in carrying out their 'special jobs' and helping to keep their school a tidy place.

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

School leaders have brought increasing stability to the school, following a period of turbulence. Children, including two-year-olds, learn an ambitious curriculum. Across each area of learning, the curriculum makes clear the precise knowledge and skills that children need to learn and when.

Communication and language provide a 'golden thread', which runs through the curriculum. Staff introduce children to stories, rhymes and songs, which develop their interest in language. Where appropriate, learning is adapted for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For example, children with limited communication skills benefit from the pictures and symbols that staff use. This enables them to learn alongside their peers. As children move through the school, high-quality adult interactions help them to build their vocabulary and understanding of language. Older children use words such as 'solution' and 'scuttle', when creating a story about a spider. Despite this, some staff miss opportunities to ensure that children engage in high-quality discussions. This prevents some children from developing or extending their speech and language as well as they could.

Staff benefit from the training they receive, which gives them the skills they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. In mathematics, for example, staff model mathematical language and present new information clearly. Most staff routinely check on what children know and remember. This helps children build their knowledge well. Two-year-olds use words, such as 'more' or 'less', during snack time. Older children use their knowledge of early number when counting objects or when talking about different shapes. However, on occasions, children's learning is not checked well enough. As a result, gaps in knowledge are not identified and addressed. This makes it more difficult for children to build their knowledge over time.

Across the school, children behave well. From the age of two, staff help them to understand the importance of taking turns and listening to others. When learning outside, children share resources and play well together. The school has effective systems in place

to check on patterns of absence. Staff work successfully with parents and carers to help them understand the importance of regular attendance. This is helping to improve attendance for many children.

The school's programme for pupils' personal development is an integral part of its work. Staff develop children's understanding of what it means to belong to the school community. They support children to learn the skills they need to find solutions to problems. The school also makes sure that children build their understanding of different faiths and festivals, such as Diwali. This prepares the children well for life in the wider world.

Governors have an ambitious vision for the school. They provide effective support and challenge so that school continues to improve. Staff value the team spirit that exists. They appreciate the time they have to carry out their roles and the consideration that the school gives to their workload and well-being.

Parents have positive views about the school. They appreciate the care that staff show to children, particularly those with SEND, and the support it offers to families.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is some variability with the way in which staff engage in high-quality interactions with children. When this happens, children do not develop or extend their speech and language as well as they could. The school needs to ensure that all staff have the expertise they need to fully develop children's language and communication skills.
- The checks that some staff make of what children have learned are not as effective as they could be. As a result, some children do not build their knowledge well enough. The school needs to ensure that staff check what pupils know and remember across all areas of the curriculum and use this to inform future learning.

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 to be good 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 good for overall effectiveness in April 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	108896
Local authority	Bristol City of
Inspection number	10344434
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	159
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Marianne Croft
Headteacher	Mandy Collier-King
Website	www.ilminsterchildren.com
Dates of previous inspection	24 and 25 April 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been changes to senior leadership since the last inspection. The interim headteacher has been in post since September 2022.
- There have been changes to the governing body since the last inspection.
- The school includes provision for two-year-olds.
- The school provides full- and part-time places for children aged two to four years old.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the interim headteacher, curriculum leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and groups of staff. He also met with representatives from the governing body, including the chair, and representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some children about their learning and looked at examples of children’s learning.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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 inspector observed children’s behaviour during learning sessions and continuous provision in both the indoor and outdoor environments.
- The inspector spoke with parents and considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also took into consideration the online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Ben Jordan, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

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