

Inspection of Blagrove Nursery School

Recreation Road, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire RG30 4UA

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 10 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. The school received ungraded inspections under section 8 of the Act on 14 December 2016 and 8 March 2022. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children love attending this nursery and arrive with big smiles on their faces. At the beginning of each session, they excitedly share their news with known adults. Each day begins with children taking part in their 'daily affirmations', which prepares them for the day ahead. Relationships form the core of the nursery's strong family ethos. As a result, children are well cared for and feel loved.

The school has high expectations for children's learning. Adults know every single child well and provide high-quality care and guidance for them. They ensure that children's play is purposeful and fun. In turn, children develop positive attitudes to their learning. They enjoy playing with their friends in the exciting environment and delight in others' achievements.

Children behave well. They develop a sense of right and wrong. They understand why it is important to follow the nursery's simple rules and well-established routines. This creates a calm and orderly environment in which all can achieve.

The school builds effective partnerships with parents. In turn, parents are united in their praise for the school. They value the school's induction arrangements that help their children settle quickly into nursery routines. They are also highly appreciative of staff, who they find to be 'helpful and kind'.

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

Children's personal development is exceptional. Staff choose activities carefully to support children to make better sense of the world around them. Children learn about different faiths and cultures. They enjoy exploring the various important festivals from each other's faiths, including Diwali and Christmas. Children and their parents relish the regular 'family learning days'. These include visits to the local area linked to the themes children are learning about. The provision for children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is a strength. As a result, children are undeterred by challenges and keenly take these on in their learning, developing resilience and independence. From the start of nursery, children are taught to identify and manage their own feelings and communicate these to adults if they need help.

The school has a highly ambitious and comprehensive curriculum in place for all areas of learning. Each area is broken down into three 'pathways' that reflect where the children are in their learning journeys. The whole curriculum is well planned and tailored to meet children's interests. Assessment is used well. Children with additional needs are identified quickly, and staff are provided with the guidance they need to support children effectively in their learning. Generally, this helps children to achieve well.

The school has placed a sharp focus on communication, language and literacy. During the day, children benefit from carefully chosen songs and nursery rhymes.

Staff make story time stimulating, with children slowly edging closer as they are sucked into what adults are reading to them. They join in with stories, fully engrossed in the plight of the characters. During all learning experiences, adults reinforce important vocabulary. They encourage early language skills such as forming questions and exploring ideas to answer them.

Throughout the provision, staff typically select appropriate activities that help them to deliver the curriculum well. They skilfully introduce and model new knowledge during group sessions throughout the day. They explore children's interests and identify what they should learn next. For example, children were thrilled by the opportunity to explore water play during a period of heavy rain. This led to lots of wonderful independent learning, including collecting water in a variety of containers and investigating the capacity of different-sized pots. Adults supported this activity well through their careful questioning, which deepened the children's understanding. In the prime areas, such as PSED, staff confidently deliver the curriculum using their secure subject knowledge. However, not all staff are as confident in delivering the specific areas of learning, such as literacy and mathematics, where the curriculum has recently been updated. As a result, not all children achieve as well as they could in some of the specific areas, as the support they receive is not quite of the same high quality.

Governors are passionate that children come first. They have a clear understanding of the nursery's strengths and priorities for development. They support leaders well and provide effective challenge. Leaders ensure that staff get the time required to carry out their roles well. In turn, staff value the training opportunities they have and leaders' awareness of their well-being. They are proud to work 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)

- In some of the specific areas of learning, adults are less confident in delivering the curriculum than they are in the prime areas. As a result, children are not achieving as well as they could. The school should ensure that staff's subject knowledge is secure in all areas of the curriculum so that children are provided with the same effective challenge and support that they receive in the prime areas.

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	109749
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10256297
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	32
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Louise Bancroft and Alison Lewis (Co-chairs)
Headteacher	Emma Payne
Website	www.blagravenurseryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 March 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The nursery caters for three- and four-year-old children. Most children attend part time.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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 and other senior leaders. They also met with members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: communication and language (taking account of early reading), mathematics, PSED, and understanding of the world. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited some lessons, spoke to staff, and talked to children about their learning.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke to the safeguarding leader and scrutinised a wide range of information, including a selection of the school's records. They also spoke to staff about safeguarding and looked at how children learn to keep safe.
- Inspectors met some parents to gain their views of the school. They reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took account of staff's responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Laura James, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sara Staggs

His Majesty's Inspector

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