

Inspection of The Wharf Nursery School

The Wharf, Woolsack Way, Godalming, Surrey GU7 1JG

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 June 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Children truly thrive in this Nursery. They love to learn. Leaders are passionate about ensuring that children have every opportunity to achieve their very best. Relationships are incredibly warm and caring. Staff really nurture the children in their care. They comfort children who are sad or upset to help them to calm down. At this Nursery, all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve exceptionally well.

Children's behaviour is excellent. They follow clear, consistent routines which helps them to feel safe and secure. When playing, children cooperate well. They enjoy solving problems together and willingly agree to take turns and share resources, for example when using buckets and spades to build sandcastles in the sand pit.

Children are knowledgeable. They have a true sense of awe and wonder about the wider world. Visitors to school awaken children's curiosity. Children learn about caring for animals through visits from a farm and about hobbies and interests through talented individuals such as dancers and musicians. Furthermore, trips to the countryside enhance children's knowledge about the natural world. Leaders also ensure that children understand their place in the wider community through involvement in events such as Christmas singing and the local pancake race.

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

Leaders have established an exceptionally well-designed and ambitious curriculum. Their expectations of what all children will achieve are very high. Leaders do not leave this to chance. The curriculum clearly identifies the important knowledge that children must learn. It is full of cleverly constructed opportunities to stretch children's knowledge of the world, inspire them to know more and capture their imaginations.

Staff's knowledge of how young children learn is extremely strong. They develop children's understanding skilfully, step by step. Staff use every opportunity to further children's learning, such as through carefully designed independent activities and targeted questioning. In mathematics, adults expertly enable children to develop deep and detailed knowledge of numbers and counting.

Staff check children's learning across the whole curriculum frequently. This ensures that any gaps in understanding are identified and addressed swiftly. Staff are quick to identify when children may not be developing as well as they should. When this happens, they use a variety of strategies to establish why this might be the case. Bespoke support is then put in place for those children who need it.

Leaders want children to be confident communicators. Highly skilled staff build children's understanding of language exceptionally well. They teach children to speak confidently in full sentences. Staff use every opportunity to introduce new

vocabulary. They encourage children to use these new words when talking to each other and in their play.

Leaders help children to develop a real love of stories. Books are everywhere. Adults read to children at every opportunity. Children listen attentively. They join in excitedly with familiar phrases and rhymes. Adults also ensure that children develop an age-appropriate knowledge of phonics to prepare them well to learn to read at school.

Children treat each other and adults with high levels of respect. Right from the very start of Nursery, children learn to manage their feelings and behaviour for themselves. Children are very kind to each other. Older children readily help the very youngest to get the most out of activities, for example by being the driver on a tandem trike.

Opportunities for children's personal development are exemplary. Children learn how to be resilient, to have a go and to have an enquiring mind. They learn how to keep fit. They understand the importance of eating a variety of healthy foods. Children keep physically active by learning how to ride bikes and how to climb safely over various obstacles. They are encouraged to develop individual talents and interests and share these with their peers.

Leaders and governors have worked together effectively to ensure that the education at this Nursery is of the very highest quality. Leaders ensure that all staff receive focused and highly effective professional development. This enables everyone to work together to provide an exceptional early education for all the children in their care.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of vigilance. Highly effective systems ensure leaders spot and act on any signs of potential harm promptly. Leaders readily refer concerns to relevant external agencies so that children get the help they need without delay. Regular staff training ensures staff's knowledge is deep, detailed and up to date. Leaders carry out all required checks to ensure that the adults in the school are safe to work with children.

The school's curriculum ensures children have an age-appropriate knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

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](#)' 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	124913
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10256308
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	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lisa Seeley
Headteacher	Christine Willmott
Website	www.wharf.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 March 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This Nursery school has places for two-, three- and four-year-olds.
- The school currently does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the ongoing impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher and senior leaders. The lead inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and had a telephone call with an officer from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language, physical development, mathematics and understanding of the

world. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and spoke to some children about their learning and their work. The inspectors also discussed planning and documentation from the other areas of the early years foundation stage curriculum with leaders.

- The inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records and interviewing staff, and through discussions with children.
- The views of parents and carers were considered through their responses to Ofsted Parent View. Further views of children and staff were gathered through surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documents, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings and behaviour incident logs

Inspection team

Sue Keeling, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Rachel Goplen

Ofsted Inspector

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