

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

Brentwood Street, Wallasey, Merseyside CH44 4BB

Inspection date:

14 January 2025

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Children at the school are happy and feel good about themselves. This is because the school focuses on them as special people. Staff help children to settle, to be calm and to make friends. This means that when children feel upset about anything, they can share their worries and feel reassured.

Children respond well to the school's clear expectations of their behaviour. Beginning in the class for two-year-olds, staff guide children gently in how to listen and respond to adults. They teach children to cooperate with each other and to respect other people and their choices. This work continues successfully with three- and four-year-olds, making sure that they are well prepared for primary school.

Children achieve well. This is because the school has high expectations of them. Teachers and teaching assistants enthuse children about learning new information and being explorers and thinkers. Children want to know even more.

Children develop new skills while at the school, such as how to play tag rugby or how to be an archer. They profit from the school's many well-thought-out educational trips, for example to the beach, theatre and zoo. The school makes sure that children are well prepared for their future lives.

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

The school has maintained the quality of its work. It makes effective use of help from external experts to review and refine its provision. The school also links effectively with other schools and provides its own staff with helpful training. By reducing staff's workload and taking steps to support their well-being, it has enabled staff to play their part in the

school's continued success. Likewise, the governing body has strengthened its work and supports and challenges the school's work effectively.

Mostly, the school's curriculum is well thought out. Much of the time, the school is clear about the key information that staff will teach to children and when. Leaders and staff focus on how they can support children's needs, development and interests through the school's curriculum. Nevertheless, on occasion, some of the curriculum is unclear about the most important information that staff will teach. This means that, sometimes, children do not learn as much as they could.

The school checks carefully what knowledge children know and remember. Staff provide children with the extra explanations or practice that they need to keep important information in their long-term memory. For example, staff revisit specific stories and rhymes with children. As a result, children enjoy and remember what they learn in the curriculum.

The school takes great care in teaching children to talk. It inspires children to learn new words. Staff in the class for two-year-olds use simple language so that children begin to understand words such as 'on', 'jump' and 'heavy' when using the big wooden blocks outdoors. Children in the class for three- and four-year-olds love to speak with staff, who are genuinely interested in what children wish to say. Children develop important skills in their communication and language.

The school acts effectively on any signs that children may have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It listens to the worries of parents and carers and offers support. It links quickly with specialist professionals for advice on children's next steps. Staff, such as those in a key person role or one-to-one support worker, know the needs of the children with SEND very well. The school's highly effective support for children with SEND helps them to overcome obstacles to their learning and to achieve well.

The school works successfully with parents. For example, it shares clear information about the importance of full attendance at school. It makes sure that parents understand that children's absences from school need a proper reason. In this way, the school helps parents and children to be ready for the move to primary school.

Leaders and staff make sure that children gain the skills that they need for life beyond the school. For instance, staff help children to take themselves to the toilet. They also teach children how to wash their hands and clean their teeth. Children benefit greatly from the school's wide range of extra learning activities. For example, during the inspection, children learned to look closely when searching the school's woodland area for a toy badger, which the staff had hidden. The school helps children to be responsible, caring and compassionate.

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, some of the school's curriculum does not make clear the component knowledge that staff will teach. This means that, at times, staff are less well focused on teaching this knowledge and children do not learn as much as they could. The school should make sure that it considers the curriculum content for each area of learning equally well.

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 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in May 2014.

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	104984
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10294205
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	63
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gill Bain
Headteacher	Phil Dickson (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.somerville.wirral.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision for its children.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- At the time of the school's graded inspection in May 2014, its name was Brentwood Nursery School. It has since changed its name.
- The school is federated with a local primary school. Both schools share the same headteacher and governing body.

Information about this inspection

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders to discuss the school's curriculum and its wider work, including attendance, behaviour, personal development and SEND.
- The lead inspector met with the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors visited a sample of learning activities indoors and outdoors, spoke with some children about their learning and looked at samples of children's work.
- There were no responses to Ofsted Parent View or Ofsted's staff survey to consider. An inspector spoke with some parents as they brought their children to school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Gower-Jones

Ofsted Inspector

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