

Emneth Nursery School

Hollycroft Road, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE14 8AY

Inspection dates

22–23 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Emneth Nursery School is a hive of learning and exploration. It is expertly led by the headteacher and ably supported by a team of dedicated practitioners. Their relentless drive has built upon the good practice seen at the previous inspection.
- Governors provide robust challenge, holding senior leaders to account for achieving the best outcomes for children.
- Children thrive in the well-planned provision. They are busy and content and behave extremely well. Children are eager to learn as they arrive for the start of each session because they love to spend time in the nurse.
- Teaching is consistently strong. No time is lost in making every moment a learning opportunity. Assessment is expertly used to ensure that the teaching meets the needs of every child across all areas of learning.
- Children are at the heart of the curriculum. Practitioners develop children's curiosity and inquisitiveness by planning activities that build upon each child's interest. First-hand experiences enrich children's learning and effectively promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Relationships with parents and carers are very strong. They are kept informed about how well their child is doing and different ways they can support them at home. This contributes well to the excellent progress children make in their learning.
- Practitioners use questioning skilfully to explore children's understanding and to challenge their learning.
- Practitioners receive excellent training and work well with other early years providers to share their expertise. The headteacher ensures that the school's own practice remains sharp by working with other schools and championing early years provision.
- From their different starting points, all groups of children, including the disadvantaged and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make exceptional gains in their learning and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The environment is thoughtfully planned to stimulate children's thinking and ensure that they are active in their learning. However, there are some missed opportunities to promote early reading skills in the outdoor area.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed opportunities to promote children's reading skills in the outdoor learning environment.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher leads the school with determination and passion, ensuring that children achieve the best outcomes possible. As a result of her ambition, the school has improved quickly since the previous inspection.
- Leaders have established a strong team approach that underpins the school's success. All staff share the high expectations and vision of the school, which places children's learning and development at the centre of everything the school does.
- Practitioners flourish through targeted professional development. Engagement with other nurseries, both here and across Europe, has enabled them to develop their skills and expertise. The headteacher ensures that the practice at Emneth is shared with other settings to help support the wider development of early years practice.
- The headteacher develops the skills within her team exceptionally well. Practitioners are empowered in their roles and make a significant contribution to the high standard of teaching. All staff are proud to work at the school and morale is high.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is accurate. Their plans for improvement are thoughtfully crafted and ambitious. Leaders make thorough checks so that improvements are quickly made.
- Leaders use the additional funding for children with SEND extremely well. Practitioners' deep knowledge of each child ensures that those children with SEND receive close attention. The curriculum and well-chosen interventions are expertly planned to provide children with experiences tailored to meet their needs. Leaders have ensured that practitioners have the knowledge and skills to make swift interventions within the daily provision. Consequently, children with SEND make very strong progress from their starting points.
- The use of additional funding for disadvantaged children is well considered. There is a high focus given to supporting children's communication and language skills as well as their social development. For example, effective use is made of outdoor learning to help to build children's confidence and provide experiences for them to talk about.
- The curriculum is expertly constructed to spark children's interests and give them a deep love of learning. Their curiosity and sense of wonder is promoted through careful consideration of the type of resources, equipment and learning areas created, both inside the classroom and outdoors. Rich and varied experiences ensure that the curriculum makes a strong contribution to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, teachers plan specific projects from children's own questions so that they can explore and investigate their local environment.
- Engagement with parents has been strengthened. Parents are delighted with the start their children make and the opportunities they have to share in the

experiences the children enjoy each day. As one parent typically said on Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, 'It is a great start for the children, providing the groundwork they need for the future.'

Governance of the school

- Governors share leaders' dedication and enthusiasm to ensure that all children receive the best start to their education. There is a range of expertise on the governing body which is used in equal measure to challenge leaders as well as offering support to help them achieve their best.
- Governors know the school well. They make very effective use of the information they receive from leaders as well as their focused visits to the school to ask incisive questions about the school's performance.
- Governors recognise the rapid improvements made by the school since the previous inspection. They are proud of the impact that these have had upon children's learning. The governors' clarity regarding their own strategic role has been significant in providing the support school leaders require to achieve success.
- Governors ensure that the arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and that their own training is up to date.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Strong relationships, developed through the children's key workers, ensures that adults know the children well and are alert to their needs. Clear routines have been established and are used consistently by all staff. This ensures the smooth running of the nursery and keeping all children safe, particularly at the start and end of each session.
- Staff receive regular training to ensure that everyone understands their responsibilities and how to recognise any signs of concern. They regularly discuss any concerns in staff meetings so that all staff are vigilant in keeping children safe. Staff understand how to record their concerns should they identify any children who may be vulnerable.
- Staff with responsibility for safeguarding have received appropriate training. Effective communications have been established with the on-site children's centre so that early help and support is available where the need has been identified.
- Leaders ensure that all the appropriate employment checks are carried out for those adults who work at the nursery. Files are well maintained and regularly checked to ensure that they contain all the information to meet requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Practitioners make very effective use of their knowledge about how children learn to ignite children's imaginations and stimulate their interests. Practitioners are very skilled at knowing when to intervene to extend and challenge children's thinking. Practitioners use open-ended questions and give time for children to process their

response. For example, during one conversation, a child wanted to make a ladybird. Considered probing and prompting helped the child to gain a better understanding of how to create an accurate representation of the insect.

- Practitioners work exceptionally well together to support children's learning and development. They regularly discuss the ways in which children have used the activities and share ideas about how these can be improved. For example, following the children's interest in playing with bubbles in the water tray, practitioners developed the activity by helping children to investigate ideas of floating and sinking.
- Practitioners make regular checks of children's learning and play. Detailed information is collated through photographs and instantly shared with parents through the school's use of online media, to which parents can add. Assessment is thorough, and the notes made capture children's development, challenge and next steps for future learning. Excellent use is made of this information to plan activities. These are well suited to meet the needs of all groups of children and support the exceptional gains they make across all areas of learning.
- Every moment is used as an opportunity for learning so that time is maximised to support children's progress. Practitioners ensure that these occasions are meaningful and placed in a context to support children's understanding. For example, snack time provides an opportunity for children to reflect on their learning. They are sociable times, helping to reinforce children's understanding of turn taking and listening to each other's thoughts and ideas. Food trays also include number mats that are used by adults to question children's counting and number skills.
- The teaching of language skills is highly effective. The constant chatter from children is developed effectively by practitioners, who model the correct use of language. As children engage in their learning, adults encourage the children to use more complex words and sentences. While playing outdoors, children spoke enthusiastically about the pirate ship they had made and used appropriate vocabulary to describe their play, such as 'being aboard,' 'lifting the anchor' and 'setting sail'.
- The use of number and mathematical language while discussing learning is a strong feature of the provision. Children are encouraged to count and recognise amounts and quantities. Through their play, practitioners question children about the size, the order and shapes of different objects. For example, while making a tunnel from play equipment, the children were asked to consider how to use the equipment from the largest piece to the smallest.
- Practitioners teach early reading and writing skills, including phonics skills, very effectively. Children are provided with opportunities to recognise letter shapes or practise writing initial sounds and words, whether this is finding their names when first registering or labelling their pictures. However, while the recording of early writing skills is encouraged throughout the learning environment, there are fewer opportunities in the outdoor area for children to develop and use their reading skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- From the moment children arrive, they are eager to get started. Well-established routines help children to feel secure and rapidly develop their confidence and independence.
- Relationships between children and practitioners are strong. Use of reflection time in small groups successfully builds trusting bonds between children and their key practitioners. All parents say that their children are safe and well cared for during their time at the nursery.
- Children are targeted with specific responsibilities. This helps to develop their self-esteem and awareness of the needs of other children. For example, children work with a practitioner to prepare the food and drinks for snack time.
- Children willingly speak to teaching staff about their ideas and feelings. Practitioners sensitively respond so that children feel valued and have pride in the things that they achieve. Children are encouraged to take risks in their learning, helping to develop their resilience and determination. Greater use of outdoor learning is used exceptionally well to provide an unfamiliar yet safe environment to promote children's social and emotional development.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- All staff have high expectations of how children behave. They model this through their own interactions with the children and are quick to praise when children are acting appropriately and being kind to one another.
- Staff are well trained in their consistent use of the school's approaches. In the very few cases of misbehaviour, they seek to understand why children behave in a particular way, by talking to them about how they feel. Children are given choices so that they are quickly re-engaged in their play and learning.
- The importance of attendance is given a high priority. Parents are reminded of the reasons why they should bring their child to school regularly. Any absences are quickly followed up. However, the chance to be part of a rich and exciting provision ensures that children are brought to school regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Many children start the nursery with language and communication skills that are at an early stage of development. Use of well-targeted strategies provides the additional teaching children require to make rapid progress. By the time they leave the nursery, children have made exceptional gains in their speaking and listening and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

- The thoughtful and well-planned environment enables children to explore all areas of development. The selection of resources is purposeful and well considered, helping children to be curious and develop the skills they require to be successful in their learning. Consequently, children make excellent progress in all aspects of their development.
- Children make strong progress in the specific areas of learning because practitioners ensure that the planned activities encourage children to write and count regularly. Children make their own books, often to record their play experiences. Time is taken to allow children to retell their stories which are scribed by adults. The use of numbers is woven through the environment, prompting children to use their knowledge and consolidate their understanding. Evidence gathered through the observations and children's documented learning demonstrates the deep understanding they gain from these activities.
- The needs of the most able children are met well. Adults routinely question the most able children to think deeper and harder about their learning. For example, while identifying which objects floated, a child was encouraged to think why this happened. The most able children are also provided with discrete teaching time so that they are challenged, ensuring that excellent progress is made by this group of children.
- The highly effective use of the early years pupil premium ensures that disadvantaged pupils achieve extremely well. Adults quickly identify where children have gaps in their learning. Plans are adjusted and additional intervention is provided for these pupils. Disadvantaged children make the same strong progress as that of their peers in the school.
- The progress of children with SEND is excellent. Staff have been well trained to deliver interventions across different areas of learning. Consequently, children with SEND receive strong support that enables them to make exceptional gains from their starting points.

School details

Unique reference number	120765
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10088732

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	84
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mick Barratt
Headteacher	Holly Bowman
Telephone number	01945 582401
Website	www.emneth-nur.norfolk.sch.uk
Email address	office@emneth-nur.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 October 2018

Information about this school

- This is an averaged-sized nursery school.
- Children attend on a flexible part-time basis, mornings, afternoons or full days. The school also offers a breakfast club and after-school club.
- The children's centre and day care provision that share the school site are subject to separate inspection arrangements.
- Nearly all the children are White British.
- There are a small number of children who are eligible for the early years pupil premium.
- As this is a nursery school, there is no sport premium funding from the government.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning throughout the nursery. All the observations were completed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. The inspector also met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body. The inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector considered the views expressed by parents informally during the school day and took account of the 20 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the eight free-text comments. The inspector also took account of the 12 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector observed the school's work and reviewed a range of documents, including safeguarding policies and the school's improvement plan.
- The inspector considered information about children's progress and looked at a sample of their work.

Inspection team

Steve Mellors, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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