



LITTLE VIPS DAY CARE SELF EVALUATION FORM 2026 - 2027

To be read alongside:

- *Nursery Development Plan (NDP) for detail about nursery context, aims, vision and priorities;*
- *Headteacher's & Nursery Managers reports to governors for actions and evaluation of impact;*
- *Nursery visit reports, (Ofsted June 26), peer review for validation of judgements.*



CONTEXT

Little VIPs Day Care is a governor led nursery providing daycare for children from nine months up to nursery age. Situated adjacent to Lowther Endowed School, it transferred from private ownership in July 2024 and is now an integral part of the nursery community.

The nursery has a NOR of 64, with a small percentage of children receiving EYFS PP, SEND support or EAL support. The nursery's vision and values are centred around achieving, caring, and enjoying, with a strong emphasis on individualised learning through play and outdoor experiences.

Little VIPs Day Care – where every child is valued, celebrated, and supported to thrive. We provide high-quality care and education within a safe, nurturing, and homely environment. At Little VIPs, we recognise that every child is unique, with their own interests, strengths, and needs. That's why we offer personalised support to help each child flourish at their own pace. Our dedicated and passionate team of early years professionals create a stimulating, caring atmosphere where children feel happy, confident, and inspired to learn and grow.

Learning Through Play

At Little VIPs, learning through play is at the heart of our approach, supporting every stage of a child's development. Our carefully designed indoor and outdoor environments offer endless opportunities for children to explore, investigate, and discover in a safe and engaging way. With a homely atmosphere, we nurture a strong sense of comfort, belonging, and confidence.

We regularly refresh our resources to reflect the seasons, the wider world, and the evolving interests of the children. This dynamic approach inspires curiosity, imagination, and wonder, helping children to grow into confident, motivated learners who are excited to engage with the world around them.

Outdoor Learning

Outdoor learning is a true passion and a cornerstone of life at Little VIPs. We know how vital time outdoors is for children's overall development, which is why we have worked hard to create inspiring outdoor spaces that enrich their learning every day. Thanks to generous donations and the addition of new outdoor furniture and resources, our environment continues to grow and improve—offering exciting opportunities for play, exploration, and discovery.



Set within the beautiful Lowther Estate, our outdoor areas provide a safe, diverse, and stimulating natural setting. Here, children can be active, creative, and connected with the world around them. Outdoor learning encourages vital skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, and resilience, while nurturing a lifelong love of nature and learning.

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES FOR 2026 – 2027

- Fully embed Little VIPs Day Care Nursery as an integral part of the nursery, with clear governance and management roles.
- Implement the new EYFS Framework 2025 through well-planned continuous provision, including pre-nursery children.
- Embed ELS phonics scheme consistently across EYFS.
- Introduce and embed a high-quality EYFS Maths curriculum with continuous provision.
- Increase use of appropriate technology in EYFS to support early learning.
- Promote reading for pleasure within EYFS.
- Review and adapt EYFS environment to support oracy development and curiosity.
- Engage parents and carers in EYFS learning through workshops and regular communication.
- Positive feedback from staff, parents, and pupils on EYFS provision.
- Attendance and intake numbers at Little VIPs and Reception stabilise or improve.

SUMMARY NURSERY EVALUATION

Key Strengths

- Children are cared for within a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment where they feel valued, secure and supported to thrive.
- Strong relationships between children, families and staff contribute positively to children's wellbeing, development and learning.
- A progressive curriculum has been developed and continues to be embedded across the nursery, providing clear learning opportunities through play, exploration and high-quality interactions.

- Outdoor learning is a significant strength and provides rich opportunities for children to develop resilience, confidence, curiosity and independence.
- Staff know children well and use observations and assessment effectively to support individual development and identify next steps.
- Safeguarding is embedded throughout the nursery and leaders maintain a strong culture where children's welfare is prioritised.
- Leaders have successfully established systems for monitoring, supervision, professional development and self-evaluation following integration into the school community.
- Inclusion remains a key priority and staff work effectively with families and external professionals to support children's individual needs.
- The nursery demonstrates a culture of continuous improvement, reflection and ambition for all children.

Areas for Development

- Continue embedding and evaluating the impact of the three-year curriculum across all rooms.
- Further strengthen systems for measuring progress and outcomes for vulnerable groups, including children with SEND.
- Continue developing opportunities for communication and language, mathematics and technology within continuous provision.
- Increase opportunities for parental engagement through workshops and curriculum-focused events.
- Continue strengthening evidence gathering to demonstrate the long-term impact of curriculum and improvement initiatives.
- Further develop leadership capacity and succession planning to support future growth and sustainability.

Overall Evaluation

Strong



Justification

Little VIPs Day Care provides a safe, welcoming and nurturing environment where children are supported to achieve their individual potential. Leaders and staff share high expectations for children's care, wellbeing and development and work collaboratively to create positive learning experiences that reflect children's interests, needs and developmental stages.

Since joining the school community, leaders have successfully established effective governance, safeguarding, monitoring and quality assurance systems. Staff have engaged positively with professional development opportunities and have contributed to ongoing improvements in curriculum design, inclusive practice and learning environments.

Children benefit from strong relationships with caring and knowledgeable practitioners who understand their individual needs. Staff use observations, assessment and professional judgement to support children's development and ensure that learning opportunities are responsive and meaningful. Outdoor learning continues to be a significant strength of the nursery and plays an important role in supporting children's wellbeing, physical development and curiosity.

The nursery securely meets the requirements of the Strong Standard across all areas of provision. Leaders have a clear understanding of strengths and areas for development and use self-evaluation effectively to identify priorities for improvement.

The nursery is also beginning to demonstrate several characteristics of the Expectational Standard, particularly in relation to safeguarding, children's wellbeing, outdoor learning, inclusive practice, staff development and leadership. However, leaders recognise that many recent developments, including curriculum enhancements, assessment systems and inclusion initiatives, require further embedding and evaluation over time before their sustained impact can be fully evidenced.

Leaders believe the nursery is securely operating within the Strong Standard and is making strong progress towards achieving the Expectational Standard across a number of areas. The focus for 2026–2027 is to continue embedding improvements, gathering evidence of impact and ensuring consistency across all aspects of provision.



SAFEGUARDING

Strengths

- Safeguarding is embedded throughout the nursery culture and is understood by all staff to be everyone's responsibility.
- Leaders ensure safeguarding remains a regular focus through staff meetings, supervision sessions, policy reviews and professional development opportunities.
- Staff receive safeguarding training and updates and demonstrate confidence in recognising, recording and reporting concerns.
- Clear safeguarding, whistleblowing, safer recruitment and staff conduct procedures are in place and are reviewed regularly.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) maintain effective oversight of safeguarding systems and record keeping.
- Staff understand local safeguarding procedures, referral pathways and the importance of timely action when concerns arise.
- Positive relationships with children and families support early identification of concerns and enable effective partnership working.
- Safeguarding records are maintained appropriately and concerns are monitored and followed up effectively.
- Children's welfare remains central to decision-making and practice across the nursery.
- Leaders promote a culture of reflection and continuous improvement to ensure safeguarding remains effective.

Areas for Development

- Continue developing staff awareness of emerging safeguarding themes including online safety, exploitation, domestic abuse and mental health concerns.
- Further strengthen parental awareness of safeguarding through newsletters, workshops and information sharing.
- Continue safeguarding audits to evaluate effectiveness and identify opportunities for further improvement.
- Ensure safeguarding developments are consistently reflected within induction, supervision and ongoing professional development processes.



Evaluation

Met

Justification

Safeguarding arrangements are effective and fully meet statutory requirements. Leaders have established a positive safeguarding culture where children's safety, welfare and wellbeing are prioritised by all staff.

Practitioners understand their safeguarding responsibilities and demonstrate vigilance in identifying, recording and reporting concerns. Regular training, supervision and professional discussions ensure safeguarding knowledge remains current and embedded within daily practice.

Leaders maintain robust systems for safer recruitment, induction, policy review and safeguarding record keeping. Appropriate procedures are followed when concerns arise and leaders work effectively with external agencies and families to ensure children receive timely support where required.

Children benefit from strong relationships with trusted adults and are cared for within a safe, nurturing environment where they feel secure and supported. Staff understand children's individual needs and are responsive to concerns relating to their welfare and wellbeing.

The nursery demonstrates several characteristics associated with strong safeguarding practice, including a culture of vigilance, effective leadership oversight, strong staff knowledge and a commitment to continual review and improvement. Leaders regularly evaluate safeguarding procedures and ensure that safeguarding remains a high priority within the nursery improvement agenda.

Leaders are confident that safeguarding securely meets all statutory requirements and provides a strong foundation for children's safety and wellbeing. The priority moving forward is to continue strengthening awareness of emerging safeguarding issues and further develop parental engagement in safeguarding matters.

Evidence of Impact

Staff safeguarding training is up to date and regularly reviewed. Safeguarding is discussed during staff meetings, supervision sessions and induction processes. Leaders maintain appropriate safeguarding records and work effectively with families and external agencies where concerns arise. Monitoring activities indicate that staff understand safeguarding procedures and apply them consistently. Children are cared for within a safe environment where their welfare and wellbeing remain central to all decision-making.

Not Met	Met
The safeguarding standards have been developed from the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the 'EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers', 'EYFS statutory framework for childminders', 'Keeping children safe in education' and 'Working together to safeguard children'. Safeguarding standards are likely to be 'not met' if any of the following apply: Serious and/or widespread failures in safeguarding practice lead to children, or particular groups of children, being unsafe. Breaches of the statutory requirements for safeguarding have a significant impact on children's safety. Leaders have not taken sufficient action to resolve weaknesses following a failure of safeguarding arrangements that meant children may not have been kept safe. Leaders are not open to challenge and/or do not learn from issues or incidents. Leaders do not identify children who may need early help and who are at risk of harm or who have been harmed. This can include, but is not limited to, neglect, abuse, grooming, exploitation, sexual abuse and online harm. Leaders do not actively seek and listen to the views and experiences of children, practitioners and parents, and they do not deal with concerns promptly, when necessary. Leaders do not understand the impact of their policies, processes and systems. They are not receptive to challenge and/or do not reflect on their own practice to	The safeguarding standards have been developed from the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the 'EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers', 'EYFS statutory framework for childminders', 'Keeping children safe in education' and 'Working together to safeguard children'. Safeguarding standards are 'met' when all the following apply: Leaders have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Leaders and practitioners meet their responsibilities to promote the safety of children, in relation to the statutory requirements for safeguarding. Multi-agency working is effective. Parents and children know who to go to for support Leaders identify children who may need early help and who are at risk of harm or who have been harmed. Practitioners recognise that babies and young children, including those with SEND, may be more vulnerable to abuse and neglect and that they depend on adults to recognise and respond to concerns on their behalf. Leaders and practitioners identify children who are in need of early help or are at risk of harm. All practitioners are vigilant and carry out their responsibilities effectively to keep children safe. They follow the setting's systems confidently and consistently. Leaders and practitioners ensure that other professionals and parents adhere to policies to keep children safe.

ensure that safeguarding policies, systems and processes are kept under continual review. Leaders and practitioners do not follow the requirements for safer recruitment, reporting, referrals and the 'Prevent' duty. Poor recordkeeping has a significant impact on children's safety. Leaders do not manage safeguarding concerns or allegations against adults appropriately. They do not fulfil their duty to refer allegations or concerns to relevant agencies, including the LADO and the DBS.	Leaders manage recruitment safely, ensuring that practitioners have the relevant qualifications and training and have passed any checks required for their roles. Leaders and practitioners understand and follow the requirements for reporting, referrals, record-keeping and the 'Prevent' duty. Policies and procedures for keeping children safe are clear and accessible. Leaders fulfil their duty to refer allegations or concerns to relevant agencies, including the LADO and the DBS. Leaders ensure that supervision, support and monitoring of adults are appropriate. The conduct and behaviour of staff are appropriate. Leaders and practitioners are receptive to challenge and reflect on their own practice so that the impact of safeguarding policies, systems and processes is kept under continual review.
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INCLUSION

Strengths

- Inclusion is central to the ethos of Little VIPs and every child is valued, respected and supported as an individual.
- Staff know children well and use observations, assessments and parental information to identify emerging needs at the earliest opportunity.
- Children with additional needs are supported through personalised approaches, targeted interventions and appropriate curriculum adaptations.
- The nursery works positively with parents, carers and external professionals to ensure children receive the support they need.
- Staff have engaged in SEND and inclusion training, increasing confidence in recognising needs and implementing effective strategies.
- Leaders promote a culture where differences are recognised, celebrated and respected.
- The curriculum and learning environments are adapted where appropriate to ensure children can access learning opportunities successfully.
- Diversity, equality and inclusion are promoted through resources, books, celebrations, role play opportunities and everyday interactions.
- Transition arrangements support children effectively when moving into nursery, between rooms and on to school.
- Leaders demonstrate a commitment to continually reviewing and improving inclusive practice.

Areas for Development

- Further strengthen systems for evidencing and measuring the impact of support provided for children with SEND and other vulnerable groups.
- Continue developing staff confidence and expertise in supporting increasingly complex needs.
- Refine tracking systems to provide clearer evidence of progress for children receiving additional support.
- Continue reviewing resources and environments to ensure they fully reflect diversity and promote inclusion.
- Increase opportunities for parental engagement linked specifically to SEND and inclusion



Evaluation

Strong

Justification

Leaders and practitioners identify children's needs effectively and provide appropriate support to enable children to access learning and nursery life successfully. Staff understand the importance of inclusion and demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that every child feels valued, safe and supported.

Children's individual needs are recognised and provision is adapted to support their development. Staff work collaboratively with families and external professionals where appropriate and use advice from specialists to inform practice. Children with additional needs are supported through personalised planning, targeted interventions and curriculum adaptations.

Recent SEND training, inclusion reviews and curriculum developments have strengthened practitioners' understanding of inclusive practice and increased confidence in meeting a range of needs. Leaders have taken positive steps to review policies, improve communication with families and ensure that inclusion remains a key priority across the nursery.

The nursery securely meets the Strong Standard because leaders identify needs appropriately, provide effective support and work proactively to reduce barriers to learning and participation.

The nursery is also beginning to demonstrate several characteristics of the Exceptional Standard, particularly through early identification of needs, strong relationships with families, staff commitment to inclusion and increasing confidence in adapting provision. Leaders recognise that further evidence of sustained impact, particularly through progress monitoring and evaluation of outcomes for vulnerable groups, is required before a higher judgement could be justified.

Leaders therefore judge inclusion to be securely within the Strong Standard, whilst recognising that current developments are moving the nursery towards the Exceptional Standard

Evidence of Impact

- Children with additional needs participate fully in nursery experiences and daily routines.
- Staff demonstrate increased confidence in discussing children's needs and implementing support strategies following SEND training and professional development.
- Parents report positive relationships with staff and feel involved in discussions regarding their child's development and support.
- Individual support strategies and curriculum adaptations help children access learning opportunities successfully.
- Leaders regularly review children's progress and engage external agencies where additional support is required.
- Inclusion is reflected throughout the curriculum, environment and wider nursery culture.

Urgent Improvement	Needs attention	Excepted Standard	Strong Standard	Exceptional
Inclusion is likely to be graded 'urgent improvement' when breaches of the EYFS requirements have a significant impact on children's safety, well-being and/or learning and development, and any of the following apply: Leaders do not identify, assess or meet children's needs well enough. Support for disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, or those who may face other barriers to their	Inclusion is likely to be graded 'needs attention' when the 'expected standard' has not been met but breaches of the EYFS requirements do not have a significant impact on children's learning and development and/or safety and welfare. This may include when one or more of the following applies: Leaders have only recently started to take appropriate action to identify and assess children's needs or reduce barriers to children's learning and/or well-being.	Inclusion meets the 'expected standard' when all the following apply: Leaders identify children's needs quickly and accurately, including any emerging or changing needs. This includes the needs of disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing. Leaders have high expectations for these children. Typically, the support they provide reduces barriers to the children's learning and/or well-being.	Inclusion meets the 'strong standard' when the 'expected standard' has been met and all the following apply: Leaders and practitioners consistently make a demonstrable difference to the opportunities and experiences of disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being. Leaders and practitioners are consistent in making sure that the barriers children face are swiftly identified and effectively addressed. They rigorously monitor the progress of children	Inspectors may consider inclusion to be 'exceptional' when the 'strong standard' has been met and all the following apply: Leaders and those responsible for overseeing the setting have a transformational impact on children's individual experiences because of their meticulous approach to promoting inclusion. Children receive commendable levels of individualised support and guidance, irrespective of the barriers that they may face. Parents are unanimously positive about the unwavering support that they and their child receive from the setting.

learning and/or well-being is ineffective. Leaders do not meet the requirements for children receiving additional support and any statutory support, including disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being.	Weaknesses or inconsistencies in practice have a negative impact on children or on a particular group of children.	Leaders ask for and implement advice from specialists and external partners, when needed. Leaders take a graduated approach (as explained earlier), which means that children's SEND needs are generally met well. Practitioners receive suitable training and support to implement this approach. Leaders have a secure understanding of these children's needs and progress. They use appropriate evidence to about the EYPP, which has a positive impact on reducing barriers to learning and/or well-being that these children face. When required, the identified SENCo has the knowledge, understanding and skills to make a positive difference for children with SEND. Leaders ensure that, when appropriate, local partnership strategies have a positive impact on the children in the setting. inform their decisions.	receiving statutory support and those who may also face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being. Adaptations are systematically and skilfully adjusted as needed, so that they make a sustained difference to children's opportunities and experiences.	There are no significant areas for improvement that leaders have not already prioritised. If this grade is awarded, leaders should use their exceptional success in this evaluation area to: support improvement across all aspects of their own setting and/or group share their learning and best practice externally to support system-wide improvement, for example with other settings, professionals, their community and stakeholders, including local and/or national networks
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CURRICULUM AND TEACHING

Strengths

- The nursery has developed a progressive curriculum that reflects the EYFS framework and supports children's development across all seven areas of learning.
- A clearly sequenced three-year curriculum has been established to provide progression and continuity as children move through the nursery.
- Learning through play remains central to the nursery's approach and is supported through carefully planned continuous provision and responsive teaching.
- Staff use children's interests, developmental stages and individual needs to inform planning and learning experiences.
- Communication and language development are prioritised throughout the nursery and embedded across daily practice.
- Outdoor learning is a significant strength and provides rich opportunities for exploration, problem-solving, creativity and physical development.
- Practitioners use observations and professional knowledge to identify children's next steps and adapt learning opportunities accordingly.
- Resources and environments are regularly reviewed and enhanced to reflect children's interests, curriculum priorities and seasonal learning opportunities.
- Staff engage positively with curriculum development and professional learning opportunities.
- The curriculum promotes children's confidence, independence, wellbeing and readiness for future learning.

Areas for Development

- Continue embedding the three-year curriculum to ensure consistency across all rooms and practitioners.
- Further strengthen progression in early mathematics throughout continuous provision and daily routines.
- Continue developing opportunities for reading for pleasure, storytelling and vocabulary development.
- Develop the purposeful use of technology to support learning and development.
- Further strengthen systems for evaluating curriculum impact and children's progression over time.



- Continue refining curriculum adaptations to ensure all children, including those with SEND, achieve the best possible outcomes.

Evaluation

Strong Standard

Justification

Leaders have developed a curriculum that reflects the needs, interests and developmental stages of the children attending Little VIPs. The curriculum is aligned with the EYFS framework and provides a broad range of experiences that support children's learning and development across all areas.

Practitioners understand the importance of learning through play and provide engaging opportunities that encourage children to explore, investigate and develop new skills. Staff use observations, assessment and professional judgement to identify next steps and adapt provision to meet individual needs.

Recent curriculum developments, including the introduction of a progressive three-year curriculum, enhanced continuous provision and curriculum monitoring systems, have strengthened the nursery's approach to teaching and learning. Staff have engaged positively with these developments and demonstrate an increasing understanding of curriculum intent and progression.

Communication and language, personal development and outdoor learning remain particular strengths of the provision. Children benefit from a curriculum that promotes curiosity, independence, resilience and positive attitudes towards learning.

The nursery securely meets the Strong Standard because leaders have established a clear curriculum vision, staff understand their role in delivering the curriculum and children access a broad and balanced range of learning experiences.

The nursery is also starting to demonstrate several characteristics of the Exceptional Standard, particularly through the development of a progressive curriculum, high-quality learning environments, strong practitioner-child interactions and effective use of outdoor learning. However, leaders recognise that many recent curriculum developments require further embedding and evaluation over time to demonstrate sustained impact across all rooms and areas of learning.

Leaders therefore judge curriculum and teaching to be securely within the Expected Standard, with emerging characteristics of the Strong Standard.

Evidence of Impact

- Children engage enthusiastically in learning opportunities and demonstrate curiosity, independence and sustained engagement.
- Staff confidently discuss children's learning, interests and next steps.
- Curriculum planning increasingly reflects progression and continuity across age groups.
- Outdoor learning opportunities contribute positively to children's communication, physical development and problem-solving skills.
- Learning environments support exploration, creativity and independent learning.
- Parents report positive engagement with their children's learning and development.
- Monitoring activities indicate increasing consistency in curriculum implementation across the nursery.

Urgent Improvement	Needs attention	Excepted Standard	Strong Standard	Exceptional
Curriculum and teaching are likely to be graded 'urgent improvement' when breaches of the EYFS requirements have a significant impact on children's learning and development and any of the following apply: Leaders' oversight of staff's implementation of the setting's systems and procedures, routines and interactions is ineffective.	Curriculum and teaching are likely to be graded 'needs attention' when the 'expected standard' has not been met but breaches of the EYFS requirements do not have a significant impact on children's learning and development. This may include when one or more of the following applies:	Curriculum and teaching meet the 'expected standard' when all the following apply: Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching in their setting. They have a clear action plan to bring about improvement. The curriculum is designed so that, across all areas of learning and development, it is clear what leaders and practitioners want	Curriculum and teaching meet the 'strong standard' when the 'expected standard' has been met and all the following apply: Leaders ensure that the curriculum is inclusive and of consistently high quality. High expectations for what children can achieve are embedded across the provision. This includes during routines and at all times of the day, such as when children's care needs are being dealt with, at mealtimes and when tidying up.	Inspectors may consider curriculum and teaching to be 'exceptional' when the 'strong standard' has been met and all the following apply: Exceptionally high standards in the curriculum and teaching have been sustained. Across all areas of learning, well-planned, effective and highly responsive teaching quickly and securely develops the knowledge and skills children need to be successful.

Practitioners do not teach the curriculum to an acceptable standard. The curriculum does not meet the full intention, ambition and breadth of the EYFS requirements. The design and sequencing of curriculum content and/or teaching are weak and lack ambition. The curriculum and/or teaching do not prepare children to build knowledge and skills for future learning, including for school, where relevant. Disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being do not have access to the same ambitious curriculum as their peers; and reasonable adjustments or adaptations are not being made, or are not reducing or removing disadvantage for	Leaders' ambitions for the curriculum and teaching are appropriate, but weaknesses or inconsistencies in implementation have a negative impact on children's progress overall and/or that of particular groups of children. Leaders have only recently started to take action to improve the curriculum and teaching. While their actions are appropriate, they are at an early stage. This means it is too soon to determine the impact of this work. Leaders and practitioners have high ambitions for disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being. However, support does not keep up with children's changing circumstances or is not well matched to their needs to enable them to	children to know and be able to do. The order in which to teach this, to give children the knowledge and skills they need for their future learning and development, including being ready for school, where appropriate, is also clear. The curriculum is an entitlement for every child. Leaders take effective action to make sure that children access an equally ambitious curriculum. This includes those attending part time or attending more than one setting, disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is typically taught well. They ensure that staff use assessment to check what children know and can do and to prevent children from falling behind. Teaching is tailored to children's different starting points, needs and stages of development. Practitioners focus on babies' and children's personal, social	Leaders ensure that highly effective teaching and interactions with children are embedded. Practitioners understand that every interaction they have with a child is an opportunity for teaching and learning. They are skilled at teaching and adapting in the moment to respond to children's emerging thinking, their curiosity and any misunderstanding, providing opportunities for children to excel in their learning and development. Leaders' and practitioners approach to the curriculum and teaching is focused accurately on children's age-appropriate learning and development needs and draws on expert guidance. Leaders and practitioners use teaching and high-quality interactions with children to assess what children know and can do. As a result, practitioners quickly identify any gaps in children's learning, as well as any children who may face other barriers to their learning, and take prompt and highly effective action.	Leaders' actions have a transformational impact on the learning of disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to learning and/or well-being. These children are now exceptionally well prepared for current and later learning, and for future success. There are no significant areas for improvement that leaders have not already prioritised. If this grade is awarded, leaders should use their exceptional success in this evaluation area to: support improvement across all aspects of their own setting and/or group. share their learning and best practice externally to support system-wide improvement, for example with other settings, professionals, their community and stakeholders, including local and/or national networks.
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disabled children, compared to children who are not disabled.	achieve these high ambitions.	and emotional development and make sure that they feel safe, secure, stimulated and happy. There is a sharp focus on developing children's communication and language and their love of books. Children's physical development from the earliest age is prioritised, to develop their strength, coordination and positive attitudes to physical activity. Practitioners teach mathematics explicitly. They focus on the mathematical learning that promotes children's confidence in and enjoyment of mathematics. The curriculum recognises and promotes equality and diversity. Practitioners support children to reflect on their similarities and to understand what makes them unique.		
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ACHIEVEMENT

Strengths

- Children are supported to make progress from their individual starting points through personalised planning, responsive teaching and nurturing relationships.
- Staff know children well and use observations, assessments and professional knowledge to identify next steps in learning and development.
- The curriculum provides children with opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and confidence across all seven areas of learning.
- Strong partnerships with parents support continuity between home and nursery and contribute positively to children's progress.
- Children demonstrate increasing confidence, independence and engagement in learning experiences.
- Early identification of emerging needs enables timely support and intervention where appropriate.
- Staff adapt provision effectively to meet children's individual developmental needs and interests.
- Children are supported to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes required for successful transitions to school.
- Outdoor learning opportunities contribute positively to children's physical development, resilience, communication and problem-solving skills.
- Assessment systems have been strengthened to support planning, monitoring and children's individual learning journeys.

Areas for Development

- Continue refining assessment and tracking systems to provide increasingly robust evidence of progress and attainment.
- Strengthen analysis of progress and outcomes for vulnerable groups, including children with SEND and those receiving additional funding.
- Further develop systems for evidencing the long-term impact of curriculum developments.
- Continue embedding consistent assessment practices across all rooms.
- Strengthen the use of assessment information to inform strategic planning and improvement priorities.

Evaluation

Strong Standard

Green – full achieved; Amber – working towards



Justification

Children make progress from their individual starting points because staff know them well and provide learning opportunities that reflect their developmental needs, interests and abilities. Practitioners use observations, assessment and professional judgement to identify next steps and adapt provision accordingly.

The nursery places strong emphasis on supporting children's personal development, communication skills, confidence and independence. Children are encouraged to become active learners and are supported to develop the skills required for future learning and successful transition into school.

Recent developments in curriculum planning, assessment systems and monitoring processes have strengthened leaders' understanding of children's achievement and progress. Staff increasingly use assessment information to identify strengths, gaps and areas requiring additional support.

Children with additional needs receive targeted support and leaders work collaboratively with families and external agencies to help reduce barriers to learning and participation. Assessment information indicates that children are making progress appropriate to their starting points and individual circumstances.

The nursery securely meets the Strong Standard because children are generally achieving well from their starting points and are supported effectively through high-quality interactions, personalised learning opportunities and strong relationships.

The nursery is beginning to demonstrate several characteristics of the Exceptional Standard, particularly through improved assessment systems, increased curriculum progression and stronger monitoring of children's development. However, leaders recognise that assessment and tracking systems require further embedding and evaluation before they can consistently demonstrate sustained impact over time and across all groups of children.

Leaders therefore judge achievement to be securely within the Strong Standard, whilst recognising that current developments are moving the nursery towards the Exceptional Standard.

Evidence of Impact

- Children demonstrate increasing confidence, independence and engagement in learning activities.
- Staff can clearly identify children's next steps and explain how learning opportunities support progress.
- Assessment information supports planning and intervention decisions.
- Children are developing skills and knowledge that prepare them for future learning and school readiness.
- Parents report positive progress in children's development and learning.
- Monitoring activities indicate that children are making progress from their individual starting points.
- Transition information supports continuity of learning and successful movement between rooms and into school.

Urgent Improvement	Needs attention	Excepted Standard	Strong Standard	Exceptional
Achievement is likely to be graded 'urgent improvement' when breaches of the EYFS requirements have a significant impact on children's learning and development and either of the following apply: Leaders have low expectations of what children can and should achieve. Leaders have a poor understanding of when children are learning and developing at different rates and the possible reasons for this. As a result, they have not addressed this with the	Achievement is likely to be graded 'needs attention' when the 'expected standard' has not been met but breaches of the EYFS requirements do not have a significant impact on children's learning and development. This may include when one or more of the following applies: Staff identify when children are learning and developing at different rates, but they do not make the adaptations needed to ensure that	Achievement meets the 'expected standard' when all the following apply: Children develop age- and/or stage-appropriate knowledge and skills across the 7 EYFS areas of learning and development as they progress through the curriculum. Children are suitably prepared for the next stage of their learning, including school, where relevant. Children, including disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being	Achievement meets the 'strong standard' when the 'expected standard' has been met and both the following apply: Children are very well prepared to transition effectively between different stages of their education, including school, where relevant. Children, including disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being secure breadth and depth in their knowledge and skills within and across all 7 EYFS areas of learning and development. They are very well prepared to make the most of	Inspectors may consider achievement to be 'exceptional' when the 'strong standard' has been met and all the following apply: Exceptionally high standards of achievement have been sustained. Across all areas of learning, children achieve consistently well, and develop the knowledge and skills to be exceptionally well prepared for their next steps. Leaders' actions have a transformational impact on the achievement of disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or

necessary urgency or as a priority. Children are not well prepared for the next stage of their learning or school, particularly disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being.	children achieve well from their starting points. Leaders understand the needs of disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing. However, some children or groups of children are not suitably prepared for the next stage of their learning, including school, where relevant.	generally achieve well from their starting points. They receive the necessary support to reach developmental goals and/or age- and stage-appropriate end points of the curriculum.	their skills and interests with increasing confidence and independence.	well-being. These children now achieve and flourish across all areas of their learning and development. There are no significant areas for improvement that leaders have not already prioritised. If this grade is awarded, leaders should use their exceptional success in this evaluation area to: support improvement across all aspects of their own setting and/or group share their learning and best practice externally to support system-wide improvement, for example with other settings, professionals, their community and stakeholders, including local and/or national networks
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BEHAVIOUR, ATTITUDES AND ESTABLISHING ROUTINES

Strengths

- Children are cared for within a calm, nurturing and respectful environment where positive relationships are prioritised.
- The nursery behaviour policy has been implemented and embedded, providing clear expectations and consistency for staff, children and families.
- Staff model positive behaviour, kindness, respect and effective communication throughout the day.
- Children demonstrate increasing confidence, independence and self-regulation appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Strong key person relationships help children feel safe, secure and emotionally supported.
- Consistent routines support children's understanding of expectations and contribute positively to behaviour and wellbeing.
- Staff use positive reinforcement and nurturing approaches to support children's social and emotional development.
- Children are encouraged to make choices, solve problems, take responsibility and develop resilience through play and daily experiences.
- Parents work collaboratively with staff to support positive behaviour and consistent expectations between home and nursery.
- The nursery promotes a culture of belonging, inclusion and mutual respect where children feel valued and listened to.

Areas for Development

- Continue strengthening attendance monitoring and early intervention procedures where attendance concerns arise.
- Further develop children's emotional literacy and self-regulation skills through planned learning opportunities.
- Continue supporting staff in responding confidently to increasingly complex emotional and behavioural needs.
- Strengthen systems for evidencing the impact of behaviour and wellbeing strategies.
- Continue developing children's independence and responsibility through daily routines and learning experiences.

Evaluation

Strong Standard

Green – full achieved; Amber – working towards



Justification

Children behave well and demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning because they feel safe, valued and supported within a nurturing environment. Staff establish strong relationships with children and families and consistently promote positive behaviour through encouragement, praise and clear expectations.

The implementation of the nursery behaviour policy has strengthened consistency across the setting and supports children in developing age-appropriate self-regulation skills. Practitioners understand children's individual needs and respond sensitively to support emotional development and wellbeing.

Children demonstrate increasing confidence and independence and engage positively with learning opportunities. They are supported to develop friendships, share resources, take turns and show kindness and respect towards others. Staff model positive behaviours and help children understand expectations through consistent routines and interactions.

Leaders actively monitor children's wellbeing, behaviour and attendance and work effectively with families where additional support may be required. Children benefit from a calm and purposeful learning environment where relationships are positive and children feel secure.

The nursery securely meets the Strong Standard because children display positive behaviour and attitudes towards learning, routines are well established and staff provide appropriate support for children's emotional and social development.

The nursery is also demonstrating several characteristics of the Exceptional Standard, particularly through the consistent implementation of the behaviour policy, strong key person relationships, nurturing practice and the positive attitudes demonstrated by children. Leaders recognise that further evidence of sustained impact and continued development of emotional literacy and attendance monitoring will strengthen this judgement further.

Leaders therefore judge behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines to be securely within the Strong Standard, whilst recognising that current developments are moving the nursery towards the Exceptional Standard.

Evidence of Impact

- Children settle quickly into nursery routines and demonstrate a sense of belonging.
- Children increasingly manage their emotions, relationships and behaviour with appropriate support.
- Staff apply behaviour expectations consistently across the nursery.
- Positive relationships between children and adults are evident throughout the setting.
- Parents report feeling supported and informed regarding behaviour and emotional wellbeing.
- Behaviour incidents remain low and are managed effectively when they occur.
- Monitoring activities indicate that children demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning and increasing independence.

Urgent Improvement	Needs attention	Excepted Standard	Strong Standard	Exceptional
Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines are likely to be graded 'urgent improvement' when breaches of the EYFS requirements have a significant impact on children's safety, well-being and/or learning and development and any of the following apply: v Leaders and practitioners have low expectations of children's behaviour and/or attitudes and/or their ability to follow routines. As a result, children do not learn the knowledge and skills they need in order to develop positive relationships and attitudes to learning and to be ready for the next stage in	Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines are likely to be graded 'needs attention' when the 'excepted standard' has not been met but breaches of the EYFS requirements do not have a significant impact on children's learning and development and/or safety and welfare. This may include when one or more of the following applies: Leaders set appropriate expectations for children's behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines, but weaknesses or	Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines meet the 'excepted standard' when all the following apply: Leaders and practitioners set high expectations for children's behaviour and attitudes to learning. These expectations are commonly understood by practitioners, parents and children. They are generally applied consistently and fairly. Incidents of poor behaviour, including unkind or discriminatory words and/or actions, when they occur, are quickly addressed. Leaders promote to families the importance of attendance and punctuality.	Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines meet the 'strong standard' when the 'excepted standard' has been met and both the following apply: Leaders have embedded a harmonious and respectful culture in which children can increasingly manage their own feelings and behaviour. Practitioners consistently enable children's best possible behaviour. They reinforce this through highly impactful teaching of behaviour and routines. As a result, children have consistently positive attitudes to their learning and to each other.	Inspectors may consider behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines to be 'exceptional' when the 'strong standard' has been met and all the following apply: Exceptional standards of behaviours and attitudes, alongside well established routines, have been sustained over time so that there is a highly inclusive culture in which all children feel that they belong. Children who need it receive exceptional and tailored support from highly skilled practitioners to improve their behaviour, attitudes and in establishing routines, with perceptible results in children's attendance and being able to manage their emotions.

their education, including school, where relevant. This leads to a disorderly environment that hinders children's learning. Children's needs are not identified or responded to effectively, with the result that they show persistently poor self-control and a lack of respect for others. Leaders lack a strategic approach to tackling poor attendance or to supporting families when children's attendance raises concerns. They do not monitor or evaluate children's attendance, or share information with any other settings that a child attends, or work with other agencies, such as the local authority's children's services, in children's best interests.	inconsistencies in practice have a negative impact on children or a particular group of children. Leaders' actions to improve children's behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines, while appropriate, are at an early stage. This means that it is too soon to determine the impact of this work. Leaders understand the needs of children, especially disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being. However, the support that leaders provide is not well matched to improving children's behaviour, attitudes or establishing routines, or does not keep up with their changing circumstances.	Practitioners teach children the importance of treating others with kindness, care and respect and are positive role models. Practitioners explicitly teach children the executive function skills they need to develop positive attitudes to learning. They help children to focus attention on what matters, screen out anything that is not relevant, hold information in mind to work on it, and focus on a goal and work out when it is necessary to change approaches to achieve that goal. Practitioners understand and consider each child's individual needs and circumstances, including those of disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face barriers to their learning. Any adaptations and/or reasonable adjustments maintain the high expectations of behaviour that reflect the children's ages and stages of development. Practitioners proactively work with other agencies to serve children's best interests.	Leaders consistently take decisive, evidence-led action to anticipate, identify and tackle barriers to attendance. This work enables children and their families, including disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being, to establish positive routines and significantly improve children's attendance in preparation for starting school.	Leaders' actions have a transformational impact on how well disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being achieve and flourish. There are no significant areas for improvement that leaders have not already prioritised. If this grade is awarded, leaders should use their exceptional success in this evaluation area to: support improvement across all aspects of their own setting and/or group. share their learning and best practice externally to support system-wide improvement, for example with other settings, professionals, their community and stakeholders, including local and/or national networks.
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		Children play games and activities collaboratively and get along well with others. Practitioners give explicit praise to reinforce children's positive behaviour. Children typically build warm, trusting and respectful relationships with their key persons. As a result, they are confident to share their concerns in age- and/or stage-appropriate ways.		
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CHILDREN'S WELFARE AND WELL-BEING

Strengths

- Children's welfare, wellbeing and happiness are central to all aspects of nursery life.
- Strong key person relationships enable children to develop secure attachments and a strong sense of belonging.
- Staff know children and families well and provide personalised care that reflects individual needs and circumstances.
- Children are supported to develop confidence, resilience, independence and positive self-esteem through daily interactions and learning experiences.
- Outdoor learning is a significant strength and contributes positively to children's physical health, emotional wellbeing and personal development.
- The nursery environment is welcoming, safe, stimulating and carefully organised to support children's learning and wellbeing.
- Healthy lifestyles are promoted through outdoor play, physical activity, healthy eating and discussions around self-care and wellbeing.
- Children's emotional wellbeing is prioritised through nurturing relationships, consistent routines and responsive support from staff.
- Parents and carers are valued partners and work closely with staff to support children's welfare and development.
- Children demonstrate confidence, happiness and security within the nursery environment.
- Transition arrangements support children's emotional wellbeing when moving into nursery, between rooms and on to school.

Areas for Development

- Continue developing opportunities for children to recognise, understand and express their emotions.
- Further strengthen parental engagement in wellbeing initiatives and family support opportunities.
- Continue developing staff expertise in supporting emotional wellbeing, resilience and mental health.
- Strengthen systems for evidencing the impact of wellbeing initiatives and support strategies.
- Continue enhancing outdoor learning opportunities that support children's personal development and wellbeing.

Evaluation

Strong Standard

Green – full achieved; Amber – working towards



Justification

Children's welfare and wellbeing are prioritised throughout the nursery and underpin all aspects of provision. Leaders and practitioners have established a nurturing culture where children feel safe, valued and supported to thrive.

Strong relationships between staff, children and families contribute positively to children's emotional security and sense of belonging. Practitioners know children well and respond sensitively to their individual needs, helping children to develop confidence, resilience and independence.

Children benefit from a safe and stimulating environment that promotes wellbeing, exploration and positive learning experiences. Outdoor learning remains a particular strength and provides children with regular opportunities to develop physical skills, confidence, resilience and an appreciation of the natural world.

Staff support children in developing healthy habits, positive relationships and age-appropriate independence. Consistent routines and strong key person relationships help children feel secure and support smooth transitions throughout their nursery journey.

The nursery securely meets the Strong Standard because children are cared for within an environment that effectively promotes their welfare, wellbeing, development and emotional security.

The nursery is also demonstrating several characteristics of the Exceptional Standard, particularly through the strength of relationships, outdoor learning provision, personalised care and the positive wellbeing outcomes observed for children. Leaders recognise that further evaluation and evidence of the long-term impact of wellbeing initiatives will support continued improvement and strengthen this judgement further.

Leaders therefore judge children's welfare and wellbeing to be securely within the Strong Standard, whilst recognising that many aspects of practice demonstrate emerging characteristics of the Exceptional Standard.

Children demonstrate happiness, confidence and a strong sense of belonging within the setting. The quality of care, relationships and support provided reflects the characteristics of a Strong Standard.

Evidence of Impact

- Children demonstrate confidence, security and a strong sense of belonging within the nursery.
- Positive relationships between children, staff and families are evident throughout the setting.
- Children engage enthusiastically in outdoor learning opportunities and demonstrate increasing resilience and independence.
- Parents report that children are happy, settled and well supported.
- Children develop age-appropriate independence skills through daily routines and learning experiences.
- Staff demonstrate a strong understanding of children's emotional and wellbeing needs.
- Transitions into nursery, between rooms and into school are supported effectively.
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Urgent Improvement	Needs attention	Excepted Standard	Strong Standard	Exceptional
Children's welfare and well-being are likely to be graded 'urgent improvement' when breaches of the EYFS requirements have a significant impact on children's welfare and well-being and any of the following apply: Practitioners do not support children's social and emotional well-being or prepare them for transitions, whether those are within the setting or to other settings, including schools.	Children's welfare and well-being are likely to be graded 'needs attention' when the 'expected standard' has not been met but breaches of the EYFS requirements do not have a significant impact on children's safety and welfare. This may include when one or more of the following applies: Leaders ensure that there are appropriate policies	Children's welfare and well-being meet the 'expected standard' when all the following apply: Leaders establish policies and practices that support children's welfare, mental health and well-being. These are generally understood by staff and parents and implemented well across the setting. Leaders create a safe, welcoming space where children typically enjoy play, learning and social activities and have daily access to outdoor learning.	Children's welfare and well-being meet the 'strong standard' when the 'expected standard' has been met and all the following apply: Leaders consistently prioritise children's welfare and well-being, ensuring that policies, procedures and practices are rigorously reviewed, strategically adapted and effectively amended. Leaders and practitioners have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the setting's children. They are highly responsive to the varying needs	Inspectors may consider leaders' work in children's welfare and well-being to be 'exceptional' when the 'strong standard' has been met and all the following apply: Exceptionally high standards of children's welfare well-being have been sustained. Children and families feel well supported, develop consistently detailed knowledge and skills, make a strong positive contribution to the setting's inclusive culture and are exceptionally well prepared for their next steps, including for school, where appropriate.

The key person system does not work effectively to ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs. It does not support children's emotional well-being, and children do not develop secure attachments with relevant carers. Leaders and practitioners fail to notice when children need attention. Leaders' policies, procedures and practice do not promote children's health and welfare. As a result, children do not know how to keep themselves safe and healthy.	and procedures in place, but these are not developed or implemented well enough to promote children's welfare and well-being. Relationships between practitioners, children and parents are generally effective in promoting secure attachments, well-being, a sense of belonging and individual care needs. However, there is some inconsistency and/or a lack of intended impact for particular groups of children, including disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing.	Hygiene practices ensure that the personal needs of babies and children of all ages are met appropriately. Practitioners teach children to become increasingly independent in managing their personal needs. Practitioners teach children about making healthy choices about food, rest, exercise and screen time. Leaders and practitioners provide a healthy diet. Practitioners make sure that mealtimes are opportunities to promote children's good manners and social skills. Practitioners support children to develop their physical and emotional health. They provide children with the age- and stage-appropriate knowledge that they need to stay safe and healthy. Children, especially disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to	and changing circumstances of individual children and families. Embedded and well-structured routines motivate children to develop long-lasting healthy habits, fostering a solid foundation for self-care, physical health and emotional wellbeing. As a result, children consistently make their own healthy choices and decisions.	Leaders' actions have a transformational impact on the welfare and well-being of disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being. These children are now able to thrive in the setting and beyond. There are no significant areas for improvement that leaders have not already prioritised. If this grade is awarded, leaders should use their exceptional success in this evaluation area to: support improvement across all aspects of their own setting and/or group share their learning and best practice externally to support system-wide improvement, for example with other settings, professionals, their community and stakeholders, including local and/or national networks.
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		their learning and/or well-being, develop secure attachments and a sense of belonging through warm and positive relationships with key persons, which promote their well-being effectively.		
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LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Strengths

- Leaders have successfully guided the nursery through a period of significant transition and development following integration into the school community.
- A clear vision centred around achieving, caring and enjoying is understood and promoted across the nursery.
- Governance arrangements are established and provide support, challenge and accountability for continued improvement.
- Leaders demonstrate a good understanding of the nursery's strengths, priorities and areas for development through regular monitoring and self-evaluation.
- Staff supervision, appraisal and professional development systems are embedded and support continuous improvement.
- Leaders have invested in curriculum development, staff training, resources and enhancements to the learning environment.
- Strong partnerships exist between leaders, staff, governors, parents and external professionals.
- Monitoring activities, including observations, learning walks, planning reviews and staff discussions, inform ongoing improvement priorities.
- Leaders actively seek and respond to feedback from staff, parents and governors.
- A positive culture of reflection, collaboration and continuous improvement is evident throughout the nursery
- Staff report feeling valued, supported and involved in the development of the nursery.

Areas for Development

- Continue strengthening leadership capacity and succession planning to support future growth and sustainability.
- Further refine quality assurance systems to strengthen evidence of impact across all areas of provision.
- Continue developing the use of assessment, curriculum and monitoring information to inform strategic decision-making.
- Increase opportunities for distributed leadership and staff ownership of improvement priorities.
- Continue strengthening evidence gathering to demonstrate the long-term impact of recent developments.
- Further develop inspection readiness through ongoing self-evaluation and review.



Evaluation

Strong Standard

Justification

Leadership and governance are effective and have played an important role in supporting the nursery through a period of significant change and development. Leaders have established clear systems and processes that support high-quality care, education and safeguarding, while maintaining a strong focus on children's wellbeing and development.

The nursery benefits from a clear vision and shared values that are understood by staff and reflected in daily practice. Leaders demonstrate a secure understanding of the nursery's strengths and areas for development and use self-evaluation effectively to identify priorities and drive improvement.

Governors provide appropriate support and challenge and maintain an active interest in the nursery's development. Monitoring systems, staff supervision, professional development opportunities and regular review processes contribute positively to the quality of provision and support a culture of continuous improvement.

Leaders have successfully introduced and embedded a number of significant developments, including curriculum improvements, behaviour systems, safeguarding monitoring, inclusion reviews and strengthened communication with families. Staff have engaged positively with these developments and demonstrate commitment to ongoing improvement.

The nursery securely meets the Strong Standard because leadership is effective, governance arrangements are appropriate and leaders have established systems that support children's learning, development, welfare and safety.

The nursery is also demonstrating several characteristics of the Exceptional Standard, particularly through effective self-evaluation, a strong commitment to professional development, collaborative working with governors and the successful implementation of improvement priorities. Leaders recognise that many recent developments require further embedding and sustained evidence of impact over time before a higher judgement could be justified.

Leaders therefore judge leadership and governance to be securely within the Strong Standard, whilst recognising that current developments demonstrate emerging characteristics of the Exceptional Standard.

Evidence of Impact

- Staff receive regular supervision, support and professional development opportunities.
- Governors maintain oversight of nursery priorities and contribute to strategic decision-making.
- Monitoring activities identify strengths and areas for development and inform improvement planning.
- Staff demonstrate increasing confidence in curriculum delivery, inclusion and safeguarding practice.
- Parents report positive relationships with leaders and confidence in the quality of provision.
- Nursery improvement priorities are reviewed regularly and actions are monitored for effectiveness.
- Recent developments have strengthened consistency, quality and accountability across the nursery.

Urgent Improvement	Needs attention	Excepted Standard	Strong Standard	Exceptional
Leadership and governance are likely to be graded 'urgent improvement' when breaches of the EYFS requirements have a significant impact on children's safety, well-being and/or learning and development and any of the following apply: Leaders are not suitable and/or do not act in children's best interests. This might include where there are	Leadership and governance are likely to be graded 'needs attention' when the 'expected standard' has not been met but breaches of the EYFS requirements do not have a significant impact on children's learning and development and/or safety and welfare.	Leadership and governance meet the 'expected standard' when all the following apply: Leaders understand the setting's context, strengths and areas for development. They are ambitious for children, taking appropriate action to drive improvement and/or maintain high standards of education and care. When improvements are needed, leaders' actions are timely and effective.	Leadership and governance meet the 'strong standard' when the 'expected standard' has been met and all the following apply: Leaders use their detailed and perceptive analysis of the setting's strengths and areas for improvement, alongside any changes in context, to understand the effectiveness of their provision, working in partnership with the nominated individual, when appropriate. They are	Inspectors may consider leaders' work in leadership and governance to be 'exceptional' when the 'strong standard' has been met and all the following apply: Exceptionally high standards of leadership and governance have been sustained. Leaders at all levels, those responsible for governance, and all staff make a strong, positive contribution to the setting's strategic priorities. This leads to continued improvement

concerns about leaders' integrity and their decisions relating to provision for children who receive statutory support, including disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face barriers to their learning and/or well-being. Leaders do not have the capacity to improve the quality of education and care. Actions taken to tackle areas for development have been insufficient or ineffective. Links with parents and with other settings and professionals involved in supporting children's education and care are weak. Staff workload is unsustainable. Where relevant, the nominated individual is unclear about their statutory duties in relation to leaders' well-being and does not support them appropriately.	This may include when one or more of the following applies: Leaders have a broad awareness of the setting's strengths and areas for development, but their actions lack precision and/or do not identify underlying causes of any weakness. Leaders' actions to bring about improvement are largely focused on the right areas for development, but do not lead to improvement quickly enough. The nominated individual understands their broad roles and responsibilities but does not support and/or challenge leaders well. Leaders are conscious of the implications that any changes to practice may have for staff's workload, but they do not do enough to manage that workload or to avoid unnecessary burdens.	The nominated individual ensures that leaders have a suitable vision and strategy for the quality of provision and that resources are managed well. They typically support and challenge leaders appropriately, giving due regard to leaders' well-being and workload. Leaders provide regular, relevant and appropriate professional learning and expertise opportunities and constructive feedback for all practitioners, which equips them to carry out their roles successfully. Leaders take action to ensure that staff feel valued and workload is manageable. They avoid creating unnecessary burdens. Leaders engage with parents and professionals thoughtfully and positively in a way that supports children's education and care. This includes at times of transition, to enable children to settle quickly when they start at the setting and move on seamlessly to other settings or school, when appropriate.	adaptive and responsive to the setting's changing needs and circumstances so that they have a consistent focus on securing excellence for all children. Leaders ensure that a culture of high expectations and professionalism is embedded across the setting. Staff make a consistently strong, positive contribution to improving the quality of provision. This makes a significant, positive difference to children's education and care. Leaders have instilled a culture of continuous improvement in which staff consistently ask for, accept and offer feedback as part of improving their practice and the provision overall. Professional learning and expertise opportunities are of high quality and are precisely matched to improvement priorities and the individual needs of practitioners. They have a positive impact on the quality of provision and on practitioners' practice. Leaders' consistently thoughtful and positive engagement with parents, including those who are harder to reach, ensures that children thrive in all aspects of	and/or sustained high standards in all areas of the setting's work. Leaders' actions have a transformational impact on the outcomes and experiences of disadvantaged children, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being. These children achieve and thrive. There are no significant areas for improvement that leaders have not already prioritised. If this grade is awarded, leaders should use their exceptional success in this evaluation area to: support improvement across all aspects of their own setting and/or group share their learning and best practice externally to support system-wide improvement, for example with other settings, professionals, their community and stakeholders, including local and/or national networks.
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	Leaders have a broad programme of professional learning and expertise, but it is overly generic or insufficiently targeted on improving practice. Leaders have engaged with parents and with other professionals, but this has been limited and/or not targeted appropriately.		their development and are exceptionally well prepared at times of transition.	
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