

# Early Years Inspection Handbook, May 2019

Ofsted grade descriptors for achieving a  
'Good' or 'Outstanding' inspection outcome

## ***Grade descriptors for Quality of Education***

### **Outstanding (1)**

- The provider meets all the criteria for a good quality of education securely and consistently. The quality of education at this setting is exceptional. In addition, the following apply.
- The provider's curriculum intent and implementation are embedded securely and consistently across the provision. It is evident from what practitioners do that they have a firm and common understanding of the provider's curriculum intent and what it means for their practice. Across all parts of the provision, practitioners' interactions with children are of a high quality and contribute well to delivering the curriculum intent.
- Children's experiences over time are consistently and coherently arranged to build cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for their future learning.
- The impact of the curriculum on what children know, can remember and do is highly effective. Children demonstrate this through being deeply engaged in their work and play and sustaining high levels of concentration. Children, including those children from disadvantaged backgrounds, do well. Children with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Children consistently use new vocabulary that enables them to communicate effectively. They speak with increasing confidence and fluency, which means that they secure strong foundations for future learning, especially in preparation for them to become fluent readers.

### **Good (2)**

#### **Intent**

- Leaders adopt or construct a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give children, particularly the most disadvantaged, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.
- The provider's curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced. It builds on what children know and can do, towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for their future learning.
- The provider has the same ambitions for almost all children. For children with particular needs, such as those with high levels of SEND, their curriculum is still ambitious and meets their needs.

#### **Implementation**

- Children benefit from meaningful learning across the EYFS curriculum.
- Practitioners understand the areas of learning they teach and the way in which young children learn. Leaders provide effective support for staff with less experience and knowledge of teaching.
- Practitioners present information clearly to children, promoting appropriate discussion about the subject matter being taught. They communicate well to check children's understanding, identify misconceptions and provide clear explanations to improve their learning. In so doing, they respond and adapt their teaching as necessary.
- Practitioners ensure that their own speaking, listening and reading of English enables children to hear and develop their own language and vocabulary well. They read to children in a way that excites and engages them, introducing new

ideas, concepts and vocabulary.

- Over the EYFS, teaching is designed to help children remember long-term what they have been taught and to integrate new knowledge into larger concepts.
- Practitioners and leaders use assessment well to check what children know and can do to inform teaching. This includes planning suitably challenging activities and responding to specific needs. Leaders understand the limitations of assessment and avoid unnecessary burdens for staff or children.
- Practitioners and leaders create an environment that supports the intent of an ambitious and coherently planned and sequenced curriculum. The available resources meet the children's needs and promote their focus on learning.
- Practitioners share information with parents about their child's progress in relation to the EYFS. They help parents to support and extend their child's learning at home, including how to encourage a love of reading.

### **Impact**

- Children develop detailed knowledge and skills across the seven areas of learning and use these in an age-appropriate way. Children develop their vocabulary and understanding of language across the EYFS curriculum.
- Children are ready for the next stage of education, especially school, where applicable. They have the knowledge and skills they need to benefit from what school has to offer when it is time to move on.
- Children enjoy, listen attentively and respond with comprehension to familiar stories, rhymes and songs that are appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Children understand securely the early mathematical concepts appropriate to their age and stage that will enable them to move on to the next stage of learning.
- Children articulate what they know, understand and can do in an age-appropriate way, holding thoughtful conversations with adults and their friends.
- From birth onwards, children are physically active in their play, developing their physiological, cardiovascular and motor skills. They show good control and coordination in both large and small movements appropriate for their stage of development.

## ***Grade descriptors for Behaviour and Attitudes***

### **Outstanding (1)**

The provider meets all the criteria for good behaviour and attitudes securely and consistently. Behaviour and attitudes in this provision are exceptional.

In addition, the following apply.

- Children have consistently high levels of respect for others. They increasingly show high levels of confidence in social situations. They confidently demonstrate their understanding of why behaviour rules are in place and recognise the impact that their behaviour has on others.
- Children are highly motivated and are very eager to join in, share and cooperate with each other. They have consistently positive attitudes to their play and learning.
- Children demonstrate high levels of self-control and consistently keep on trying hard, even if they encounter difficulties. When children struggle with this, leaders and practitioners take intelligent, swift and highly effective action to support them.

## Good (2)

- The provider has high expectations for children's behaviour and conduct. These expectations are commonly understood and applied consistently and fairly. This is reflected in children's positive behaviour and conduct. They are beginning to manage their own feelings and behaviour and to understand how these have an impact on others. When children struggle with regulating their behaviour, leaders and practitioners take appropriate action to support them. Children are developing a sense of right and wrong.
- Children demonstrate their positive attitudes to learning through high levels of curiosity, concentration and enjoyment. They listen intently and respond positively to adults and each other. Children are developing their resilience to setbacks and take pride in their achievements.
- Children benefit fully from the early education opportunities available to them by participating and responding promptly to requests and instructions from practitioners.
- Relationships among children, parents and staff reflect a positive and respectful culture. Children feel safe and secure.

## Grade descriptors for Personal Development

### Outstanding (1)

- The provider meets all the criteria for good personal development securely and consistently. Personal development in this provision is exceptional. In addition, the following apply.
- The provider is highly successful at giving children a rich set of experiences that promote an understanding of people, families and communities beyond their own.
- Practitioners teach children the language of feelings, helping them to appropriately develop their emotional literacy.
- Practitioners value and understand the practice and principles of equality and diversity. They are effective at promoting these in an age-appropriate way, which includes routinely challenging stereotypical behaviours and respecting differences. This helps children to reflect on their differences and understand what makes them unique.

### Good (2)

- The curriculum and the provider's effective care practices promote and support children's emotional security and development of their character. Children are gaining a good understanding of what makes them unique.
- The curriculum and the provider's effective care practices promote children's confidence, resilience and independence. Practitioners teach children to take appropriate risks and challenges as they play and learn both inside and outdoors, particularly supporting them to develop physical and emotional health.
- A well-established key person system helps children form secure attachments and promotes their well-being and independence. Relationships between staff and babies are sensitive, stimulating and responsive.
- Practitioners provide a healthy diet and a range of opportunities for physically active play, both inside and outdoors. They give clear and consistent messages to children that support healthy choices around food, rest, exercise and screen time.
- Practitioners help children to gain an effective understanding of when they might be at risk, including when using the internet, digital technology and social media

and where to get support if they need it.

- Practitioners ensure that policies are implemented consistently. Hygiene practices ensure that the personal needs of children of all ages are met appropriately. Practitioners teach children to become increasingly independent in managing their personal needs.
- The provider prepares children for life in modern Britain by: equipping them to be respectful and to recognise those who help us and contribute positively to society; developing their understanding of fundamental British values; developing their understanding and appreciation of diversity; celebrating what we have in common and promoting respect for different people.

## ***Grade descriptors for Leadership and Management***

### **Outstanding (1)**

The provider meets all the criteria for good leadership and management securely and consistently. Leadership and management in this provision is exceptional. In addition, the following apply.

- Leaders ensure that they and practitioners receive focused and highly effective professional development. Practitioners' subject, pedagogical content and knowledge consistently builds and develops over time, and this consistently translates into improvements in the teaching of the curriculum.
- Leaders ensure that highly effective and meaningful engagement takes place with staff at all levels and that any issues are identified. When issues are identified – in particular about workload – they are consistently dealt with appropriately and quickly.
- Staff consistently report high levels of support for well-being issues.

### **Good (2)**

In order for the effectiveness of leadership and management to be judged good, it must meet all of the following criteria.

- Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive care and education to all. This is realised through strong shared values, policies and practice.
- Leaders focus on improving practitioners' knowledge of the areas of learning and understanding of how children learn to enhance the teaching of the curriculum and appropriate use of assessment. The practice and subject knowledge of practitioners build and improve over time. Leaders have effective systems in place for the supervision and support of staff.
- Leaders act with integrity to ensure that all children, particularly those with SEND, have full access to their entitlement to early education.
- Leaders engage effectively with children, their parents and others in their community, including schools and other local services.
- Leaders engage with their staff and are aware of the main pressures on them. They are realistic and constructive in the way they manage staff, including their workload.
- Those with oversight or governance understand their role and carry this out effectively. They have a clear vision and strategy and hold senior leaders to account for the quality of care and education. They ensure that resources are managed sustainably, effectively and efficiently.
- The provider fulfils its statutory duties, for example under the Equality Act 2010, and other duties, for example in relation to the 'Prevent' strategy and safeguarding.

- Leaders protect staff from harassment, bullying and discrimination.
- The provider has a culture of safeguarding that facilitates effective arrangements to: identify children who may need early help or are at risk of neglect, abuse, grooming or exploitation; help children to reduce their risk of harm by securing the support they need, or referring in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help; and manage safe recruitment and allegations about adults who may be a risk to children.

### ***Grade descriptors for Overall Effectiveness***

#### **Outstanding (1)**

- The quality of education is outstanding.
- All other judgements are likely to be outstanding. In exceptional circumstances, one of the judgements may be good, as long as there is convincing evidence that it is improving this area rapidly and securely towards outstanding.
- Safeguarding is effective.
- There are no breaches of EYFS requirements.

#### **Good (2)**

- The quality of education is at least good.
- All other judgements are likely to be good or outstanding. In exceptional circumstances, one of the judgement areas may require improvement, as long as there is convincing evidence that it is improving it rapidly and securely towards good.
- Safeguarding is effective.

*Taken from 'Early Years Inspection Handbook for Ofsted Registered Provision' May 2019 no. 180040. This document should be used in conjunction with reading of the full inspection handbook which can be found on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).*