

# Wingate Community Nursery School

**Address:** Partridge Terrace, Wingate, County Durham, TS28 5BD

**Unique reference number (URN):** 113971

## Inspection report: 9 June 2026

|                    |                                                                                   |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Exceptional        |  |
| Strong standard    |                                                                                   |
| Expected standard  |                                                                                   |
| Needs attention    |                                                                                   |
| Urgent improvement |                                                                                   |

### **Safeguarding standards met**

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

### **How we evaluate safeguarding**

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

# Exceptional ●

## Achievement

Exceptional ●

Leaders' and staff's ambition for all children is without limit. Children are encouraged to 'think big' here. They are supported to see what they can do and be successful doing it. They make exceptional progress through the opportunities they are given to develop learning, confidence and independence.

Learning is tailored to the individual children. This ensures that, over time, every child makes progress and secures learning. Across all areas of the provision, learning is impressive. Children use books to carry out research into what they want to learn. They talk at length with adults and peers about their learning and enjoy their success.

The breadth of experiences that children are given here, ensure they learn essential skills, such as problem-solving, concentration on learning and listening to others, alongside awareness of the foundational skills for reading, writing and mathematics. This ensures that they are exceptionally well prepared for their next stage in education.

## Attendance and behaviour

Exceptional ●

From the child's first enrolment at the Nursery, leaders place great emphasis on the importance of attending every day. Leaders have created robust policies to monitor attendance. They focus on forming positive, supportive relationships with the families and welcoming them into the Wingate community. Nothing is left to chance. Leaders and staff greet children at the door daily. They make time to support any families, who are finding it difficult to bring their children to Nursery regularly. For example, changing session times. Support is extensive and effective.

Children's understanding of the routines of the day ensure that behaviour is excellent across the provisions. Children have highly positive attitudes to learning. They show exceptional focus and interest as they are attentive, engaged and eager to play and learn alongside each other. At times, as would be expected with very young children, some struggle to manage their emotions and behaviours. Although this is extremely rare, if it does happen, the approaches staff use to teach children about resolving conflicts with others is exceptional. Children show maturity beyond their years as they are supported to discuss incidents with each other and find resolutions. The consistency of staff understanding in the use of the approaches ensures that the children feel safe. They know that adults value them and will support them.

## Curriculum and teaching

Exceptional ●

Leaders and governors are experts in early years practice. They have designed the 'Wingate Way', an exceptionally well-designed and unique curriculum, informed by international research. Key knowledge and skills are clearly identified and carefully mapped out. Staff use their extensive knowledge of the curriculum to support children to learn in 'family groups', where children work together to plan how and what they want to learn each day. They are enabled to explore the exciting environment with their friends and regularly

review learning through discussion. The curriculum enables children to explore their ideas within an environment that engages and interests them.

There is a strong focus on communication. Children are taught to listen and hold complex conversations with each other, facilitated by highly skilled staff. For example, staff extend ideas, such as 'Shall we build a boat?' by discussing the materials needed or the place they will sail to. Staff encourage children to use books to research ideas and share their learning with others.

The opportunities for investigation and learning are endless. All children, including those with barriers to learning, are transformed into scientists, artists or gardeners through the opportunities they are given. They experience meaningful learning for life, as they look at nature using microscopes, work with friends to control gravity using water pipes or look after the chickens in the allotment.

## **Inclusion**

**Exceptional** 

Leaders are passionate and ambitious. They have provided a world which enables and encourages all children to learn. They ensure that every child is seen as an individual and can learn alongside their peers.

The challenges faced by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those with other barriers to learning, are extremely well understood. All staff are highly skilled. Learning is individualised and any children who are struggling are quickly identified and supported.

Leaders ensure that families' voices are heard and valued. Staff seek to find out about each child, to develop deep knowledge of their interests and personalities. Staff use this knowledge to ensure that all experience the exciting learning opportunities.

Leaders use the varied environments flexibly. All aspects of the provision are fully inclusive. Staff regularly check learning and identify the best environment to support individuals. They enable children to spend extended periods in different provisions, if this is needed to help them to learn. This flexibility has a transformational impact on some children's lives. For example, children struggling with the indoor environment can spend extra time at the allotment. The freedom and support they have, enables them to develop important communication skills and enjoy learning.

The early years pupil premium strategy is used to great effect to ensure that sessions support all individuals to learn.

## **Leadership and governance**

**Exceptional** 

The leaders' vision to provide a place that nurtures happy, confident and curious learners is shared by all stakeholders in the school. There is a clarity and consistency of thinking and understanding that is transforming children's lives. The expertise of leaders, at all levels, is influencing practice within the nursery, across the local area and beyond.

Leaders' ambitions have no limits. Careful thought has been used to develop the Nursery to date. Professional learning is targeted closely to staff needs and results in consistently expert practice. Leaders' introduction of a progressive audit tool is used by staff to identify their strengths and further professional development needs. It is driving further excellence.

Leaders have a comprehensive knowledge of the strengths of the school and the challenges faced by some families in the community. They leave no stone unturned to support all children to develop confidence, independence and a love of learning. Families are overwhelmingly positive about the school. It is seen as a special place in the community.

The governors, leaders and staff have worked together to develop the provision over time. They look far and wide for expertise, which they use to great effect to enact further improvements. There is a culture of high expectations. Leaders' relentless drive, to continually refine what they do and enhance children's experiences, is shared with all stakeholders. The practice, provision, curriculum, teaching and understanding of the Wingate Way is clearly exceptional.

## **Personal development and wellbeing**

**Exceptional** ●

The school is central to the local community. Families are valued here and children are supported to develop a feeling of belonging to Wingate. The focus on personal development is threaded through every aspect of learning. Individuals are supported to understand who they are and what they can contribute to the community and wider world. Staff's secure understanding of child development means that they help every child to do this and to overcome any barriers to learning.

Through the well-planned curriculum, all children experience a wide range of opportunities. They explore art and music, develop knowledge of science and nature through gardening at the allotment and take part in community events. They thrive on the challenges they are given that enable them to develop understanding of complex concepts, such as compassion, commitment or creativity. The 'Angel of the North' sculpture, created by children for the Nursery garden, is testament to how these opportunities encourage children to 'think big'. Success is swiftly spotted here. Children enjoy developing leadership skills, as they teach others what they have learned to do.

Staff do not shy away from difficult topics. When situations arise that may cause concern or worry to children, such as world events or the death of a pet, 'village meetings' are held to talk about them. Staff show extraordinary skill and gentleness as they discuss events and encourage children to talk about their thoughts with friends. They are determined that children should gain a real understanding of the world, at an age-appropriate level.

Children are given an exceptional range of wider development opportunities during their time in nursery. For example, spending extended weeks of learning at the allotment provision. These regular opportunities develop children's resilience, confidence and independence. Every moment is a learning opportunity. For example, seeing the children share lunchtimes together is a joy, as they chat about learning, share ideas and develop impressive social and self-help skills.

# What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Children at Wingate thrive. The opportunities they are given to explore, learn and grow are exceptional. Play is valued here. Every child is presented with exciting possibilities from the moment they enter the Nursery. Staff have an excellent understanding of the interests and personalities of the children in their care. They use this well to support and guide learning.

Leaders and staff have created environments that ensure there is no ceiling on what all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with other barriers to learning, can achieve.

Children attend regularly because the world here is exciting. They learn in places of wonder, such as the art studio or the science laboratory. These areas are deliberately planned and resourced to engage and challenge children to be creative and explore ideas. On the allotment site, children learn about growing food and looking after animals. They work together to plan how to approach the jobs that need doing. Children are immersed in nature, during day-long 'rambles' focused on learning. All children benefit from the time they are given to think, form ideas and solve problems. The real world is brought to them at Wingate, within safe, secure and exciting environments.

Relationships at Wingate are kind and caring. Staff are excellent role models. Children learn about respect and kindness. Children care for each other and develop a mature understanding of difference. Every interaction is used effectively to help children develop secure knowledge across the curriculum.

Children's behaviour is consistently superb. They treat others and their environment with respect. When they encounter difficulties, they seek help from others. Staff are highly skilled and know to give children time to explore their feelings and develop understanding of the world around them. Children demonstrate incredible perseverance, focus, independence and resilience. They are exceptionally well prepared for future learning.

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## About this inspection

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher during the inspection, as well as a members of the governing body and a representative of Durham local education authority. They also spoke with other staff, parents, carers and pupils.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

The school provides before- and after-school care.

The school has 3 sites, all within close proximity of the nursery building. The main nursery, the allotment and the cottage in the woods.

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Barbara Beels.

Headteacher: Becky Wood

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**Lead inspector:**

Andrea Casey, His Majesty's Inspector

**Team inspector:**

Amy Cookson, Ofsted Inspector

## Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from [different sources](#). More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

 The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 9 June 2026

## School and pupil context

### Total pupils

**92**

### What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

### Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

**0.0%**

### What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

### Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

**0.00%**

### **What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

### **Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support**

**7.61%**

### **What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support at the school.

### **Location deprivation**

## **Well above average**

### **What does this mean?**

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

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## **Our grades explained**

### **Exceptional**

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

### **Strong standard**

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

### **Expected standard**

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

### **Needs attention**

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

### **Urgent improvement**

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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