

Inspection of an outstanding school: Sunny Brow Nursery School

Sunny Brow Road, Archer Park, Middleton, Manchester M24 4AD

Inspection dates:

16 October 2019

Outcome

Sunny Brow Nursery School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children are at the heart of everything that this school does. Each child is recognised as a unique individual. The co-headteachers and their team have the highest aspirations for all children. They believe there are no limits to what children can achieve.

Children blossom because they are happy, safe and secure. They find their wonderful learning environment irresistibly exciting. As a result, they become curious, confident and resilient learners.

We observed excellent standards of behaviour around the nursery. Children are polite and courteous. They share resources well and play happily with and alongside each other. We saw lots of positive interactions between staff and children. There was no evidence of any form of bullying. Children are far too busy to squabble.

Parents and carers hold the school in the highest regard. They have the utmost confidence in the headteacher and her team. Parents typically commented, 'This is a magical school where the children are at the centre of everything.'

The local authority uses Sunny Brow as a model of good practice for other schools within the locality. Particularly noteworthy is the provision for outdoor learning. Children relish the time they spend outdoors, where every aspect of their learning is addressed.

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

Children make an excellent start to their education at Sunny Brow. Leaders, governors and staff know exactly what they want to achieve for all children. They are not prepared to compromise on the quality of education that they provide.

Leaders have made sure that staff are experts in teaching young children. Staff know what to teach and in what order, right across the curriculum. Adults make sure that

children's knowledge is secure before moving them on to the next stage of learning. Children achieve exceptionally well. They remain engaged and focused in their learning at all times. Children are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Learning to read is top priority at this school. Children are immersed in a magical world of books and stories from the day they arrive. Adults make careful choices about which books to read and when. Children soon have favourite books that they love to read and to take home. Adults prepare children for phonics in ways that are inspirational. For example, children stop at the 'listening tree' on their forest walks. They learn to listen carefully for the tiniest sounds. Then they use these same skills to pick out the sounds that letters make in words, for example in their own names. Adults keep a close watch on children's learning so that no one falls behind.

The curriculum for mathematics is excellent. Children learn to count with accuracy and to recognise shapes. There are plenty of opportunities for children to practise their mathematical skills. For example, we saw children concentrating very hard on balancing quantities of objects until they were 'the same'. Other children compared the sizes and shapes of leaves as they played outdoors. Children develop confidence in mathematics as a result of these wonderful experiences.

Children are fascinated by the world around them. They enjoy exploring their environment. They giggle with delight as they find minibeasts with their magnifying glasses. They learn to identify plants and to use correct terms such as 'fungi'. Children learn about the changing seasons. They learn to describe what they have observed, such as how leaves change colour as autumn approaches.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) take part in all aspects of school life. Leaders' work with parents and outside agencies is very effective. Children with SEND receive the support they need. This ensures they achieve well.

Leaders ensure that children learn to appreciate diversity in the wider world. Children learn about a range of faiths and cultures. They learn about family differences in ways that are appropriate for their age.

Governors are highly supportive of the co-headteachers and their team. Staff value the opportunities that they have for training and further development. They appreciate leaders' concern for their well-being and work-life balance. Staff told us that they are proud to work at Sunny Brow.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise children's safety and welfare. Staff are trained to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse. They are vigilant and report any concerns quickly and correctly. Leaders are quick to follow up any unexplained absences from school.

Leaders and staff work well with other agencies such as local children's centres. This

enables them to support families who may be facing difficulties.

Leaders, governors and staff take great care to make sure the school site is safe and secure. Staff teach children how to recognise risks and hazards. This helps children to keep themselves safe indoors and outdoors.

Background

When we have judged a maintained nursery school to be outstanding we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding on 12–13 November 2014.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	105760
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10046048
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	James Mountford
Co-Headteachers	Janet Cook and Debra Wright
Website	www.sunnybrow.rochdale.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 November 2014

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, a new chair of governors has been appointed.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons at various times during the day.
- Inspectors held meetings with members of the senior leadership team, governors and staff.
- Inspectors looked at examples of children’s work and spoke with children when they visited lessons. Inspectors listened to children read.
- Inspectors held additional discussions with staff that focused on safeguarding. They also examined documentation relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into reading, mathematics and understanding the world. Deep dives are the methodology by which inspectors identify why a subject is as it is. This entails discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, looking at examples of children’s work, discussions with teachers and discussions with children.
- An inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.

- An inspector spoke with some parents at the start of the school day. The inspectors took account of 11 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also took account of nine responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Doreen Davenport

Ofsted Inspector

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