

# Inspection of a good school: Howard Street Nursery School

Howard Street, Rochdale, Lancashire OL12 0PP

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Inspection date: 19 November 2021

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Children are happy in this nursery. They quickly get to know important things, like where to find their coat pegs or wellington boots. Children settle down quickly to their favourite activities when they arrive. They know that every day there are exciting things to do.

Leaders want children to learn and develop well. Children soon learn to listen carefully to adults. They enjoy the reading and counting activities that adults provide. In some areas of learning, children learn less well. This is because leaders have planned the curriculum less carefully in some areas.

Children are happy to play alongside each other. They learn to share toys and to take turns in games. Children learn to look after the resources in the nursery. For example, they handle books carefully so that they do not tear. Children treat each other kindly. Adults know what action to take if any bullying should occur.

The nursery is a warm and welcoming place for parents and carers as well as children. Parents said that they know their children are safe here. However, some children do not attend as often as they should.

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

The curriculum plans that leaders have put in place cover all areas of the early years foundation stage. All children in the nursery learn from this curriculum, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have decided what they want children to know and be able to do by the time they leave the nursery.

Leaders have planned the curriculum carefully in some areas of learning. For example, in communication and language, reading and mathematics, leaders have decided the most

important knowledge for children to learn. The curriculum plans set out the order in which children need to learn this important knowledge. Children build up and remember this knowledge securely over time in these areas of learning. However, leaders' checks to see how well children are remembering this information are at an early stage of development.

In other areas of learning, curriculum plans contain less information about the important knowledge children need to learn. This makes it more difficult for leaders and adults to make sure that children learn and remember everything that they should in those areas.

Children develop a love of reading. They listen attentively to the stories adults read to them. They are keen to join in with their favourite parts, for example when words rhyme with each other. Children choose books for themselves from the nursery's attractive library areas. Even the youngest two-year-old children love to share books with adults. They like to turn the pages by themselves and sometimes point to the pictures. Older children enjoy the sound games they play in their phonics lessons. For example, they like making a hissing sound when they see a picture of a snake. These games help to prepare children for learning about letters and sounds when they start school.

Leaders work with parents and a range of professionals to identify children with SEND quickly. This ensures that these children get the expert help they need. Children with SEND learn from the same curriculum as other children.

Leaders and staff provide a range of opportunities for children's wider development. For example, children raise funds for charity. They travel on the minibus to the local primary school to play in the woodland area there. The relationships between leaders, staff, parents and children are strong. These relationships are important because they enable children to feel confident, for example, to try out new experiences and to make new friends.

Children behave well in the nursery. The rules and routines that adults provide are easy for children to understand and follow. Children learn to walk sensibly and to tidy up after themselves. They show good manners, for example by saying 'please' and 'thank you' at the snack table. Most children attend nursery regularly. This helps them to make the most of the learning opportunities available to them. Leaders' plans to improve children's attendance further are at an early stage.

Governors are knowledgeable about the nursery. They ask leaders a range of questions to make sure it is running well. Governors are mindful of the impact of their decisions on staff's workload. Staff said that they feel supported in their work.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspectors agreed that expressive art and design, physical development and understanding the world may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff have a range of safeguarding training. This enables staff to recognise the signs of abuse. There are clear systems for staff to report any concerns they may have about a child. All staff know how to use these systems.

Leaders and staff have strong working relationships with a range of other professionals, for example through the children's centre and the local authority. These relationships enable them to secure help for children and their families where it is needed.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some areas of learning, curriculum plans do not contain enough information about the exact knowledge leaders want children to learn. This prevents children from learning all of the important knowledge they need. Leaders must ensure that curriculum plans contain enough information about the knowledge that children need to learn to prepare them well for their next steps in learning.
- In some areas of learning, leaders do not have a clear understanding of how well the curriculum is enabling children to know more and remember more. This is because the systems that leaders have developed to check children's learning are at an early stage of implementation. Leaders must ensure that this new system is fully embedded so that they can check on how well children are learning.
- Attendance at the nursery is irregular and inconsistent for some children. This prevents them from making the most of their learning, and from developing good attendance habits in readiness for school. Leaders need to do more work to encourage good attendance for all children, so that they benefit from the curriculum and are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2016.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 the school and 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105757
<b>Local authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	10199597
<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	68
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Janet Cooke
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sandra Hartley
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.howardstreet.rochdale.sch.uk">www.howardstreet.rochdale.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 and 21 January 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The nursery school is currently being led on a temporary basis by an executive headteacher, who leads both Howard Street Nursery School and Greenbank Primary School.
- Since the last inspection, a new chair has been appointed to the governing body.
- The nursery school offers provision for two-year-olds.
- The nursery school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors met with the executive headteacher and head of school. The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: early reading, mathematics and expressive art and design. For each deep dive, the inspectors met

with curriculum leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of classroom activities, spoke to teachers and looked at children's learning records.

- The inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other areas of learning.
- The inspectors reviewed documentation, which included the leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and in their free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. They also spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe, and reviewed the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with a few parents at the start of the day. The inspectors also spoke with staff to discuss leaders' support for them.

### **Inspection team**

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sue Eastwood

Her Majesty's Inspector

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