

Inspection of Grace Owen Nursery School

1-7 the Pavement, Duke Street, Park Hill, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S2 5QD

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 February 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Children love attending Grace Owen Nursery School. They receive a big cheery welcome every morning from enthusiastic staff. Staff help them to settle quickly by establishing clear and regular routines. Children are familiar with these routines and enjoy choosing their morning activity at the start of the day. This helps them to be independent.

Leaders have high expectations of what all children can achieve. Children are well cared for, happy and enjoy taking part in a variety of activities. They are proud of their achievements. They happily show off their work to visitors.

Leaders know the families well. They have a range of strategies to get to know the children before they join Nursery. As a result, positive relationships form quickly between staff and children. Children feel safe and are quickly comforted by staff when they are upset.

Children enjoy learning about other faiths and cultures, such as Chinese New Year. Leaders extend these learning opportunities to parents through Saturday morning events. Parents appreciate the activities on offer and feel that they learn something new.

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

Leaders and governors have a clear vision for the school. They have planned the curriculum to ensure that children acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to prepare them for primary school. Leaders carefully consider the interests of the individual child as part of these plans. For example, some children's interests in dinosaurs help staff to plan activities that extend the number of words that children can say. The checks that staff make on what children know and can do help them to plan their next steps. However, while there is a clear focus on introducing new vocabulary and developing language, some adults do not give children enough time to do this. As a result, some children do not use this vocabulary as well as they should.

In mathematics, leaders have identified the concepts and vocabulary they want children to learn over time. During 'group time', children learn this key knowledge. Leaders carefully plan activities to reinforce this learning while playing. Children know mathematical concepts such as 'taller' and 'shorter' and are confident when counting.

Leaders have a clear plan for how children will develop a love of reading. Two-year-olds love learning new rhymes. Adults capture children's imagination. They engross them in learning to count while listening to rhymes. Older children learn new stories by first getting to know the characters. Leaders choose books that have similar themes to previous books. Children enjoy listening to the story and identifying the similarities and differences. They go on to create their version of the story and are

proud to narrate this to the rest of the group.

Leaders have high ambitions for everyone to achieve, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The support that children with SEND receive is exemplary. Leaders work closely with parents when they have a concern about their child and identify any extra support their child needs. They regularly review this support to ensure that it is working. Staff receive a plethora of training to enable them to expertly deliver effective strategies to support children with SEND. For example, children with SEND quickly learn the names of body parts in a fun and interactive way. Children with SEND thrive at Grace Owen Nursery.

Children know the routines and staff's expectations extremely well. They alert staff if someone is not following the rules of the classroom. Children respond quickly to any instructions given to them. Tidy-up time is a busy time when everyone knows what they should be doing. Children love the roles that they have been given.

Children learn how to make friends and manage any disagreements that they may have. Staff teach children negotiation skills through role play and stories. They model how to share and take turns. They create opportunities and space for children to practise these skills. Children enjoy sharing resources and playing with each other.

Staff use signing to reinforce learning and expectations of behaviour. This helps children to learn and understand what is expected of them. It enables children, particularly those children with SEND, to communicate their feelings. Any incidents that do occur are managed effectively by staff. As a result, children behave well. However, some incidents that do occur are not recorded in a systematic way. The records that leaders keep for behaviour and attendance are not as thorough as they should be. This means that leaders are unable to identify patterns and trends to enable them to plan support.

Governors are knowledgeable about the educational priorities and strengths of the school. They ask pertinent questions about the quality of education. Governors know the importance of safeguarding, behaviour and attendance. However, they do not offer the same level of challenge to leaders in these areas as they do around the quality of education.

Staff are proud to work at this school. They feel supported by leaders and know that they are mindful of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make the appropriate checks on adults to ensure that they are safe to work with children. Leaders provide regular safeguarding training and updates for all staff. Staff know the signs of neglect and abuse and know how to report any concerns that they may have.

Leaders know the children and families well. They support families who are in need and make the appropriate referrals when necessary. Children are safe. While leaders respond to concerns and act upon them, the records that they keep are weak. Any actions or concerns that leaders and staff take are not recorded in sufficient detail. This means that leaders cannot track incidents and the actions taken effectively.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While staff are well trained about the importance of communication and language, not all staff give enough time for children to use newly introduced vocabulary. As a result, some children do not use this vocabulary as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that staff give children processing time to use the vocabulary that they have been taught.
- Leaders do not have effective systems in place to ensure that there is accurate recording of behaviour incidents, attendance and safeguarding actions and outcomes. They do not regularly analyse information to identify patterns and trends. Leaders need to ensure that they have effective systems in place so that they can track behaviour, attendance and safeguarding effectively and put improvement strategies in place when required.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account effectively enough in relation to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. They do not question the information provided to them by leaders. Governors must ensure that they have the necessary training to be able to scrutinise information and decisions made by leaders so that they can assure themselves that their statutory responsibilities are being fulfilled.

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.

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	106975
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10200729
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	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nicola Goodwin
Headteacher	Nancy Farrow
Website	www.graceowennursery.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been significant changes to leadership since the last inspection. The previous headteacher is now the executive headteacher over two Nursery schools. There is a newly appointed assistant headteacher who is the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the designated safeguarding lead, governors and representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in communication and language, literacy, mathematics, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to children while engaged in their

activities and looked at children's work.

- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans, records of governance and documentation relating to attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors observed children in their classrooms during various points of the day.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector checked the single central record and scrutinised safeguarding records. Inspectors checked staff's knowledge of the school's safeguarding procedures. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and reviewed the school's actions to support vulnerable children, including sampling relevant records.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors spoke with parents at the end and the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Jenny Thomas, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Judy Shaw

Ofsted Inspector

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