

Inspection of an outstanding school: Reedley Hallows Nursery School

Burnley Campus, Barden Lane, Burnley, Lancashire BB10 1JD

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 May 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children, including two-year-olds, arrive at school each day keen to join their classes. They want to learn with staff and with their many friends. Children feel that they belong here; that their needs, interests and ideas matter to each adult. Reedley Hallows is a nursery school where all children are noticed and ably supported by staff. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are happy and achieve well. This is because leaders and staff have high expectations for children's learning.

Children develop much new knowledge and many important skills because of the teaching that staff provide. For instance, they learn to climb, slide and balance, including by using the indoor climbing frame in the classroom for two-year-olds. Children quickly learn to talk and communicate, which meant that when meeting the inspector, they were keen to ask him his age.

Children learn how to behave themselves through staff's gentle guidance. They avoid behaviour that would lead to bullying. Leaders act quickly to resolve any behavioural issues.

Children find much to fascinate them and to engage them in learning at the nursery. They also relish the freedom to explore the large, well-developed outdoor area, supported by the kind, expert staff.

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

Leaders have established clear and ambitious aims for their curriculum. From the very start of children's time in the class for two-year-olds, staff focus on giving children a secure start in their physical, social and language development. Through the well-

thought-out curriculum, staff enthuse children about learning, and children develop important knowledge.

In both classrooms, staff successfully teach leaders' intended curriculum. Staff draw on their secure understanding of child development and how children learn in organising learning activities for the children. They identify children with SEND quickly and support them to access the same curriculum as their peers.

Leaders' curriculum is rich in talk, stories, songs and rhymes. Staff use their first-rate expertise in talk, questioning and gesture to support and extend children's learning successfully. Children can share their thoughts and ideas with the staff, who genuinely want to hear what children wish to communicate. Children at the school, including those who speak English as an additional language, quickly become confident, skilled communicators.

Staff carefully select a wide range of stories to read and re-read to children. Through these high-quality experiences, the children build much familiarity with key stories and characters. For example, when using some puppets to rehearse the story of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff', staff helped children to understand the meaning of 'bridge', 'trip-trap' and 'troll'. Children frequently enjoy using books that staff set out in cosy classroom libraries. Through staff's teaching, two-year-olds, as well as three- and four-year-olds, come to love stories and to know words and letter sounds.

In activities, such as snack time and songs and stories, staff teach the children without disruption. This is because they successfully help children to know how to behave. Beginning in the class for two-year-olds, children learn to listen, cooperate and sit for a suitably short time.

Most of the time, staff use assessment strategies carefully alongside their detailed knowledge of individual children to decide how well children are learning the curriculum. However, sometimes staff do not make enough use of the school's curriculum to assess children's progress.

Leaders make sure that staff support children's personal, social and emotional development effectively. Children learn to cooperate and to mix with one another. Guided by staff they become responsible, independent and thoughtful.

Leaders and staff help parents and carers to understand how to use activities to help their children's learning at home. Parents who shared their views with the inspector were very complimentary about the high quality of staff's work with their children, including in supporting children with SEND.

Until recently, subject leaders have not thought enough about how the curriculums in the class for two-year-olds and the class for three- and four-year-olds connect. This has meant that leaders have not focused enough on building children's learning between the classes. Senior leaders have started to help subject leaders to deepen their knowledge of each area of learning for two- to five-year-olds. Staff are starting to lead colleagues' work in the curriculum across the whole school. This work is at an early stage of development.

Governors use their skills effectively to challenge and support the work of leaders. The headteacher has made certain that staff have a reasonable workload. She has worked successfully with staff to ensure that they understand their roles and feel happy in their jobs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff understand their responsibilities for safeguarding. They provide staff with regular information and training about a range of local and national safeguarding issues.

Staff listen to what children say about their experiences at home. They carefully note any concerning changes in children's appearance or behaviour. Staff speak with parents to check on any concerns that arise at school. Where appropriate, leaders link with other agencies, such as social care, to make sure that children are safe. Leaders ensure that staff's concerns and leaders' actions on safeguarding are carefully recorded.

Staff teach children about staying safe, such as how to use a hammer at the woodwork bench and how to take sensible risks when playing outdoors.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, staff do not make enough use of leaders' curriculum when assessing children's learning. This means that some of staff's understanding of children knowing more and remembering more of the curriculum is unclear. Leaders should ensure that staff more fully use the curriculum to assess children's progress.
- Some subject leaders' knowledge of the content of the curriculum for two-, three- and four-year-olds, and of how to lead the curriculum across both classes, is underdeveloped. This means that the curriculum in some areas of learning is not as well developed or led as it could be. Senior leaders should continue to strengthen the understanding of subject leaders so that they have even more positive impact on the work of staff to teach the curriculum in both classes.

Background

When we have judged a 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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have

serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in February 2013.

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	133060
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10256232
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	178
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rebecca Lindley
Headteacher	Karen Gordon
Website	www.reedleyhallows.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- As part of the school, leaders provide up to 70 places for two-year-old children, mostly in the 'Twinkle Tots' classroom for two- and three-year-olds.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision for children.
- The headteacher was new to the school in September 2022. One of the classroom teachers was also newly appointed to her role at that time. The role of special educational needs coordinator is held by an external expert employed part time at the school. The chair of governors was appointed in October 2022.
- Many children at the school speak English as an additional language. Children at the school speak at least one of 16 different community languages, which is a wider range of languages than was represented at the previous inspection.
- The school was founded in 2008 from the amalgamation of Barden Lane Nursey School and Elm Street Nursery School. The school is in a purpose-built building shared with two other providers that are separately registered and inspected by Ofsted. These are Barden Primary School and Holly Grove School, a special school. These providers were not part of this inspection. A public library and a faith centre open to all faiths are also located on the campus. Thomas Whitham Sixth Form, which was on the campus,

closed in August 2020. At the time of the previous nursery school inspection, another separate provision, Reedley Hallows Children's Centre, was formerly located on the site.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector completed deep dives in communication and language/early reading, mathematics, and personal, social and emotional development. He met with leaders and visited learning activities and spoke with some children. The inspector spoke with staff about the curriculum.
- The inspector spoke with some staff about working at the school. He evaluated responses from staff to Ofsted's survey. The inspector considered leaders' analysis of staff responses to a recent survey.
- The inspector reviewed responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. He also considered a summary of responses provided by leaders of their own recent survey of parents' views. The inspector spoke with some parents as they arrived at the school with their children.
- The inspector met with an adviser from the local authority and spoke by telephone with the school's external adviser.
- To evaluate safeguarding, the inspector considered the views of parents and spoke with leaders and staff. He also checked a sample of leaders' records and policies.
- The inspector met with three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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