

Inspection of an outstanding school: Rachel Keeling Nursery School

Bullards Place, Morpeth Street, Bethnal Green, London E2 0PS

Inspection date:

15 June 2023

Outcome

Rachel Keeling Nursery School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a nursery which children genuinely love coming to. Children and their parents and carers are greeted warmly and with kindness by staff each morning. Children can't wait to get involved in activities from the moment they walk through the door.

Staff and leaders think really carefully about how to make children's learning meaningful. They provide children with a wealth of opportunities to explore the world. Children spend plenty of time outside in the school's garden, which is a hidden oasis for children to play and learn in.

All children feel welcomed and included. Children behave well together and quickly learn staff's expectations and school routines. They are taught that 'everyone at Rachel Keeling Nursery is a friend'. This approach pervades all the conversations and relationships that children and adults have here.

Everyone helps to ensure that children become independent, confident and resilient in their learning. Staff know the children that they work with very well. They share information with parents so that everyone can work together to help children to flourish. Through their aspirational curriculum, leaders and staff support children very effectively to be ready for their next stage of education. Staff and leaders have regular meetings to discuss what children have been learning and what they will learn next to reach these aspirational goals.

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

Leaders have created an ambitious curriculum. They provide lots of rich opportunities for children to widen their interests. In doing so, leaders have thought carefully about what children should be taught and how these skills and attitudes will lay the foundations for them to be successful, both in their current learning and in the future.

Leaders and staff work with other professionals to ensure that any child with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) gets expert support and care to join in with everything that happens in the nursery. This support is provided in a joined-up manner through both school staff and external agencies, such as speech therapy. When children start at the nursery, staff quickly identify what their additional needs may be. Through their regular discussions, staff and leaders understand which areas of the curriculum children need to work on further. These areas are then addressed in a thoughtful but systematic way so that all children, including those with SEND, learn exceptionally well.

Books and stories are at the centre of children's experiences. Children use books to explore and deepen their understanding in each area of learning. For example, children were pond dipping, finding small creatures in the school's pond. They observed the features of these creatures and used reference books to identify and find out more about each of them. Staff also use story times as a way to widen children's understanding of the world. For example, a story set in Africa provided a starting point for children to learn and talk about different countries. Staff helped children to use words such as 'continent', and developed their understanding of where different people, songs and rhymes come from.

Children enjoy plentiful opportunities to build and create. In the woodworking area, children are supported to use specialist tools with care. Through their questions and modelled language, staff guide children to try out new ideas and decide for themselves what their final pieces of art or woodwork should look like. Children remember the routines for using the tools safely and for tidying them away once they have finished with them.

Children learn to read and write numbers and learn about addition and subtraction. They have fun joining in with counting and counting rhymes. The curriculum is planned so that children get to practise and apply what they learn often. For example, children confidently used their counting skills to measure their ingredients during their cookery session where they made healthy food.

Leaders have considered carefully how they can support children to be able to express their feelings. Staff promote independence and resilience throughout the school day. Children respond well to this and listen to each other when they are working alongside their peers. Leaders ensure that children experience a range of activities that broaden their experiences and promote their wider development. Leaders also work closely with parents. For example, they organise workshops so that parents have a strong understanding of the work that the school does and how to support their children.

Staff are proud to work here. They explained that leaders listen and that the whole team works together for the benefit of the development of children in their care. Staff feel that they receive excellent training and that this helps them to be effective in their work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders and staff know children and their families well and have built strong relationships. This helps parents to feel secure in asking for help from the school when they need to. Staff know how to identify and report any worries. Leaders follow up on any concerns quickly. They work effectively with external agencies to sensitively support parents when required.

The curriculum teaches children about keeping safe. Children learn about where they can go for help. Staff are well trained and are confident in the support that they receive from leaders.

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 November 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	100886
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10289795
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Zohra Khanom
Headteacher	Becky Dolamore (Executive headteacher)
Website	www.rachelkeeling.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school became federated with Children's House Nursery School in January 2022.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

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.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding. They also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in language and communication, personal, social and emotional development and mathematics. As part of each deep dive, inspectors met with leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited classrooms, spoke to children and spoke

to staff. They reviewed examples of children's learning. Inspectors also considered other areas of the curriculum.

- Inspectors considered the safeguarding arrangements at the school by reviewing safeguarding documents and speaking to safeguarding leaders, members of the governing body and staff. They reviewed the safeguarding checks that leaders do on members of staff when they are appointed to work at the school.
- Inspectors spoke to parents on the day of the inspection. They also considered the views of parents who completed Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View.
- They discussed workload with staff and reviewed the responses of staff to the staff online survey.

Inspection team

Adam Vincent, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jonathan Newby

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023