

Inspection of a good school: Strong Close Nursery School

Airedale Road, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD21 4LW

Inspection date:

12 September 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Strong Close Nursery School provides children with an exceptional start to their education. Leaders consider all aspects of the provision carefully. Children benefit from a high-quality, ambitious curriculum, and they achieve well.

Children are happy in school. They engage enthusiastically with the activities on offer and play cooperatively with their friends. Adults prompt children to turn-take and share. They model the use of good manners.

The environment in the school is safe, calm and welcoming. Adults develop positive, nurturing relationships with children. There are high expectations for behaviour. The use of songs and rhymes helps to reinforce these expectations. Children respond very quickly to adults' instructions. They demonstrate excellent behaviour throughout the indoor and outdoor provision as well as at lunchtimes. Routines are very well established. Visual aids and Makaton signs are used alongside simple explanations to support the teaching of routines.

The school values the contribution that parents and carers make to their child's education. There are a wide range of opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning, such as through the 'McRed' (male carers reading every day) initiative or by attending one of the 'stay and play' sessions. The school offers extensive support to families. This may be through an external agency or one of the school's courses for parents. The school is keen to promote good attendance habits so that children are prepared for primary education. The school ensures that parents understand the importance of regular attendance.

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

The school's curriculum is very well planned and sequenced and takes account of the diverse community that the school serves. Staff understand the importance of a sharp focus on the prime areas of communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and physical development. Activities are well thought out to develop a wide range of children's skills in these areas. The specific areas of learning are woven through activities so that they are also developed. For example, practitioners support children to recognise shapes and patterns while they are modelling with playdough. Practitioners use the information from assessments to adapt the curriculum to meet children's needs. They use several 'toolkits' to support children to make progress.

Communication and language underpin the curriculum. Staff know the right amount of language to use with children so as not to overwhelm or confuse them. Any children who are at risk of falling behind with their communication and language development are quickly identified. The school provides extra support to help these children to catch up with their peers. Curriculum plans identify key vocabulary children are to learn. Adults use this vocabulary within the setting until children can also use it.

Carefully selected key texts help to develop a love of reading. Texts are repeated numerous times so that children become familiar with them and know them by heart. Parents can access these texts online and are given ideas of how they can bring them to life at home using everyday objects. Parents are also able to access the school's library. The school is involved with the 'Imagination Library' that gives all children a free, age-appropriate book every month to keep.

The provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength of the school. Practitioners are adept at supporting children with SEND, both in the mainstream and resourced provision. The school has thought carefully about how to meet the needs of all children. For example, mirrors and patterns hang from the ceiling to stimulate children who are unable to walk. Staff teach all children a 'sign of the week' so that everyone can communicate with each other.

Practitioners consider how to broaden children's experiences. The school has links with a local nursing home and children have been to visit the residents there. Community picnics are an opportunity to celebrate the diverse nature of the school. Community planting days enable children to contribute positively to their local environment.

While there have been some recent changes in governance, including the very recent appointment of an experienced chair of the governing body, governors are well placed to support the school moving forward. They understand their duties and responsibilities and are committed to the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 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 good in March 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 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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	107185
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10269213
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Pete Sayers
Headteacher	Helen Jones
Website	www.strongclosenscc.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- At the time of the last inspection, the school was part of the Manningham Community Nursery Schools Federation. The school has now defederated.
- There have recently been some significant changes to the governing body. A new chair of the governing body was appointed the day before the inspection.
- Strong Close Day Nursery was operating from the school site at the last inspection. This provision has now closed.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children.
- There is a specially resourced provision at the school that caters for a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities. These include specific, moderate and severe learning difficulties, visual and hearing impairment, physical disability, autism, speech, language and communication difficulties and social, emotional and mental health needs. There are thirty places in this provision.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school provides before- and after-school childcare which is managed by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- 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 headteacher, assistant headteacher, special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, the chair and other members of the governing body and the education adviser from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development, and literacy. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited the provision, spoke to teachers, spoke to some children about their learning and looked at project books.
- Inspectors considered how the school caters for pupils' wider development.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour when accessing both indoor and outdoor provision and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors examined the single central record and looked at how safeguarding incidents are reported. Inspectors spoke to leaders, staff and governors about the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- Inspectors considered the free-text comments made by parents in response to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, as part of the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with some parents at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Philippa Kermotschuk, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sharon Stelling

Ofsted Inspector

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