

Inspection of a good school: The Orchards Nursery School

Lower Orchards, Highfield Road, Farnworth, Bolton, Lancashire BL4 0RA

Inspection date: 21 March 2024

Outcome

The Orchards Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children make a positive start to their education at this welcoming school. The school is ambitious for children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Building independence is an important aspect of the school's ambition for its children. Skilled staff help children learn the knowledge and skills to realise this. Many children, including those with SEND, achieve well.

Children work hard to meet the school's high expectations for their behaviour. Staff promote positive behaviour from the moment children join the two-year-old provision. Children learn the importance of sharing and cooperating with one another. Staff provide effective support for those children who need extra help with their behaviour. Older children learn how to care for others, such as checking on a friend when they are upset.

Children are happy and enjoy coming to school. They readily engage with the exciting learning activities. Children learn to be responsible through activities such as caring for chicks and tidying up. They also learn about people who help others in a community, gaining particular delight in visits from firefighters and police officers.

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

The school has created a broad and interesting curriculum. The school has identified much of the important knowledge that staff will teach and the order in which children will learn it. Across many areas of the curriculum, staff are well trained in educating young children, including two-year-olds. In the main, children, including those with SEND, are well prepared for their next steps.

In a small number of areas across the curriculum, the school has not identified some of the important knowledge that children should learn in sufficient detail. This makes it tricky for staff to know what they should prioritise when designing learning activities. As a result, in these areas of learning, some children do not gain a deep knowledge.

Across much of the curriculum, staff design learning activities that build on what children already know. Staff use opportunities to address any gaps in knowledge that children have. However, in a small number of areas, staff are not as clear on what children do and do not know. This is because the school does not check on what key knowledge children have learned in these few areas.

The school has effective systems in place to identify and assess the additional needs of children with SEND. Carefully considered support and resources ensure that children with SEND access the same curriculum as their classmates.

Children attending the specially resourced provision for children with SEND (specially resourced provision) follow the curriculum alongside their peers. Staff tailor learning activities to meet these children's individual needs well. Staff are skilled in developing children's language and communication skills, as well as supporting their social interactions. The school works effectively with parents and carers and a range of external professionals to support these children successfully.

Staff understand how to support children's language development effectively. Staff enable children to use words and gestures to ask questions and communicate their ideas confidently. Staff carefully choose books that help children to develop their vocabulary. Children, including two-year-olds, know and enjoy many different stories, rhymes and songs.

Children behave well. This is because staff teach them how to care for one another, look after resources and to respect adults. Children become deeply involved in their learning because there is little disruption to their activities. They follow routines and enjoy the praise that they get for their positive behaviours. Any children who need extra help to manage their emotions are supported well by nurturing staff.

Children benefit from a range of opportunities to broaden their personal development. For example, they learn about different festivals, visit the pantomime and enjoy themed days in school. Staff teach children to be independent and to make important choices about their own health. For example, children are encouraged to eat healthily. At snack time, they eat fruit and vegetables. Children are also taught the importance of hygiene, such as washing their hands before sitting down for a snack.

Governors have a secure understanding of the quality of education provided by the school. They offer effective support and challenge. The school is considerate of staff's workload and well-being when making decisions about policies and procedures. Staff value being part of the close-knit team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some areas of learning, the school has not identified the important knowledge that children should learn in enough detail. This hinders staff in knowing what learning they should prioritise when designing activities and slows some children's learning. This contributes to some children not deepening their knowledge as well as they could. The school should finalise their curriculum thinking in these areas of learning.
- In a small number of areas, at times, staff do not check on children's understanding of the key knowledge in the curriculum. As a result, in these areas, some children are not as well prepared for the next stage of education as they could be. The school should ensure that staff identify and address any gaps in key knowledge that children may have.

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 December 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](#)' 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	105145
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10294213
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Holly Bonfield
Headteacher	Andrew Feeley
Website	www.theorchardsfederation.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Orchard Federation which comprises of three schools.
- The executive headteacher of the federation is Andrew Feeley, who is also the headteacher of this school.
- The school operates a specially resourced provision for children with SEND. This caters for two-year-old children with profound and multiple learning disabilities. At the time of the inspection, there were 5 children on roll at the specially resourced provision.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

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 had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language, mathematics and personal, social and emotional development. For each

deep dive, the inspectors met with curriculum leaders, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to staff. Inspectors spoke with children when visiting lessons and considered their work.

- The inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other school leaders and members of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record and took account of the views of leaders and staff. They also considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.
- The inspectors observed children's behaviour in lessons and at social times.
- The inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They also considered the views of staff shared through Ofsted's online staff survey.
- The inspectors spoke with some parents and carers. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text responses.

Inspection team

David Robinson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Victoria Burnside

His Majesty's Inspector

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