

Inspection of a good school: Ronald Tree Nursery School

Laburnum Crescent, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN16 9PH

Inspection date: 11 July 2024

Outcome

Ronald Tree Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Every child, and their family, are valued at this school. Adults know the children very well. They treat each one as an individual, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Adults use their knowledge of each child to provide opportunities in the curriculum that link to their interests.

At school, the children have lots of opportunities to be outdoors. Children enjoy opportunities to visit the 'Green Patch', where parents and carers can come along too. They enjoy feeding the chickens and growing produce, such as tomatoes. They look forward to selling these plants during the nursery's 90th birthday celebrations.

Adults model using positive language. This enables children, including those with SEND, to express their emotions and needs in an appropriate way. They learn to understand how their actions can have an impact on their peers and their feelings. This has reduced incidents of falling out. Any issues are quickly resolved so that children can get on with their learning. Children feel safe because the nursery environment is welcoming and harmonious.

Parents say that the staff at this nursery are 'caring, compassionate and inspirational'. They comment on how their children have 'flourished' during their time at the nursery.

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

A 'year of experiences' underpins the school's curriculum. These are key opportunities that the school wants the children to have during their time at the nursery. These include opportunities to explore the locality, grow produce and understand different cultures, traditions and festivals. These experiences sit alongside the school's curriculum, which outlines what children should learn, know and be able to recall with increasing independence. However, the school's work to weave these experiences into a more precise and refined curriculum, which includes the two-year-old provision, is not yet complete.

All children learn to respect and celebrate each other's differences. They learn how to be thoughtful and caring towards each other. The 'tiger room' supports children with SEND to succeed and thrive alongside their peers. These children are provided with a curriculum that is well considered. It is precise and implemented very well. The school is ensuring that this precision is reflected in all its curriculum thinking.

Communication and language development are at the heart of all learning. Children, including those with SEND, select and choose books to share with familiar adults. In play, adults expand children's verbal communication by echoing sentences with added detail. For example, when packing a picnic for the moon, adults prompted children to pack 'one more' snack and how eating too much would make a tummy get 'bigger and bigger'.

Most adults at the school have a secure understanding of how young children learn and develop. They skilfully use opportunities to extend children's thinking through play. For example, children consider how to construct a roof for their structure. Adults model children's ideas through print. This gives children a sense of pride. However, checks to ensure that the school's curriculum is fully implemented are at an early stage. Some staff are developing the leadership knowledge and expertise to make these checks.

Songs and rhymes are readily used throughout the day. Children with SEND eagerly anticipate their 'music maker' sessions. This enables them to express their ideas through non-verbal communication, humming or even blowing into paint pots to echo sounds. Other children use the sessions to learn how movement and music can be used to express ideas.

Governors are passionate about their vision for the nursery. They want to ensure that the school continues to meet the needs of the local community. They support the school's weekly parent session at the adjacent community centre, for example.

Staff appreciate the efforts made by leaders to support their well-being and workload. They feel these actions are having a positive impact on their work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's work to refine the curriculum is not yet complete. The different documents staff use to plan and deliver the curriculum do not completely link together in a cohesive manner. This means that the sequence of learning that the children receive is not as seamless as it could be. The school needs to complete its work on the curriculum so that all staff are completely clear about precisely what children need to know and remember during their time at the nursery.

- The checks that the school makes on how well the early years curriculum is being implemented are at an early stage. Some staff are developing the leadership knowledge and expertise to make these checks. Therefore, in pockets, the curriculum is not fully implemented as intended. The school should ensure that the systems and processes to make checks on how well the curriculum is being taught and recalled by the children are understood and implemented well by all staff.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2017.

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 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	121782
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10254893
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	119
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nikki Glazebrook
Headteacher	Debra Thwaites
Website	www.ronaldtreenursery.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher has been in post since January 2021.
- The school admits two -year-old children.
- The 'tiger room' is the school's internal SEND provision. It is used to meet the needs of children with an educational health care plan.
- The school does not use any 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 received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered

the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- Inspectors conducted deep dives into communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and understanding the world. They also considered the curriculum in some other areas of learning. They spoke with leaders, staff and visited lessons. They considered curriculum documentation.
- Inspectors held meetings with various staff to evaluate the school's curriculum, including the provision for children with SEND. They also considered how the school promotes positive attitudes towards behaviour and attendance.
- The lead inspector met those responsible for governance. A meeting was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through Ofsted's online surveys, including Parent View. They also spoke with parents on site during the inspection.
- Inspectors met with groups of staff and considered the responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Shaheen Hussain, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Emma Tayler

Ofsted Inspector

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