

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Sunny Brow Nursery School

Sunny Brow Road, Archer Park, Middleton, Manchester M24 4AD

Inspection date:

19 November 2024

Outcome

Sunny Brow Nursery School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), thrive at this school. When they arrive at the start of the day, each child is greeted warmly by staff. Children are extremely happy because of the fun learning that they experience, including with their many friends. They feel safe here.

The school's ambitious curriculum offers children many rich opportunities to develop new knowledge. Children love to play in the school's well-designed classrooms and extensive, wooded grounds. They gain important knowledge, such as about the 'stop tree', beyond which no-one should go without an adult. Children respond to the school's high expectations and achieve well.

Children learn successfully about how to behave. This is particularly evident in the school's work with two-year-olds. Staff help children gently to share toys and to tidy up before they move to other play areas. Children are sensible. They look after the school's resources and equipment.

The school helps children to develop important aspects of their character. For example, it skilfully uses puppets to teach children about different behaviours. Children learn to be confident, resilient and persistent. This helps children to be ready for their lives as British citizens.

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

The school acts thoughtfully in its work. It considers the possible impact of its decisions on children and staff. This approach enables staff to have the time and support that they need to enjoy their roles and to do them well. Children flourish because they are at the heart of the school's work.

By and large, the school's curriculum content is well thought out. In addition, the school thinks very carefully about how children learn. This means that the school offers children worthwhile and memorable learning. Much of the time, children learn new knowledge well, building on what they already know. Nevertheless, on occasion, the school thinks less clearly about some of the key information that it will teach to the children. Sometimes, this makes it difficult for the school to ensure that children learn what they need to know.

The school ensures that staff learn about each child's individual development and interests. Staff check carefully how well children learn the curriculum. This helps staff to identify and support the needs of children with SEND promptly and effectively. As a result, children experience success.

Through its curriculum, the school values books and stories highly. In each class, children hear stories read to them often. Staff respond thoughtfully to children's requests to hear their favourite stories. For example, staff tell of a man who was made of sticks and about a mythical bear-like creature. Children love listening to and re-telling stories.

Through many well-thought-out learning activities, the school helps children to develop their understanding of new words. For example, it builds on children's learning outdoors by deepening their understanding of important words, such as 'hibernating' and 'boundaries'. Children, including children with SEND, develop a thrill for learning language. They communicate and talk with other people well.

Children learn how to behave well at the school. Leaders and staff are supportive and positive with children. Low-level disruptions are rare and short-lived, which means that children and staff can learn to focus on learning activities. The school liaises very effectively with parents, including to ensure that children attend school often and punctually.

The school thinks carefully about how it supports children's wider development. Staff teach children how to manage risks well. In the summer term, staff consider when children are ready to learn to use knives safely under adult supervision. Children learn these skills during special sessions in the school's woodland area. The school also takes a careful approach to introducing its campfire to the children. Staff ensure that children know to act safely near the fire. Staff teach children about different people and communities. Children build the knowledge they need for life beyond the school.

The actions taken by the school ensure that it remains a happy, successful place to learn, work or seek support. Even so, the school is sometimes unclear about how it will improve

aspects of its work further. This holds it back from achieving even more. The governors bring valuable expertise to their oversight of the school's work. They keep a careful eye on the long-term life of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, the school does not think as carefully as it could about the component knowledge that it wants children to learn from its curriculum. This means that, on occasion, children do not learn some of the key information that they could. The school should make sure that all its curriculum is equally well thought out.
- On occasion, the school does not identify some of its improvement priorities clearly enough. This holds back some of its efforts to maintain its existing successes. The school should consider more thoroughly which aspects of its work it will refine and how it will do so.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in November 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	105760
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10347980
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	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gemma Duggan (acting chair)
Headteacher	Debra Wright
Website	www.sunnybrow.rochdale.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision for children.
- Since the previous inspection, the co-headteacher role has changed to one headteacher being responsible for the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the school to discuss some areas of learning, behaviour, SEND and its provision for children's personal development.
- The lead inspector spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met with some governors and considered a letter sent to Ofsted by another governor.

- The inspectors visited a sample of learning activities, including in the school's woodland area. They spoke with some children about their learning and looked at samples of children's work.
- The inspectors spoke with some parents and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspectors spoke with staff about working at the school and considered the responses to Ofsted's survey of staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and children; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Gower-Jones

Ofsted Inspector

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