

Inspection of an outstanding school: Slough Centre Nursery School

Buckingham Avenue East, Slough, Berkshire SL1 3EA

Inspection dates:

26 March 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high 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?

Children get off to a wonderful start at Slough Centre Nursery, particularly children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language when they arrive. The inviting school environment nurtures and shapes children's character. Expert staff give children the vocabulary and building blocks to be ready for primary school. Parents report they cannot believe the difference the school makes and hold the staff team in high regard.

The school has responded proactively to the impact of the pandemic given these children were born during that time. Adults are highly ambitious and make clear to parents the value of an early years education. Children behave impeccably because staff have taught them rules, routines and how to explain what they are feeling. Adults are excellent role models for children. Visual cues support those children who are beginning to speak in sentences effectively. Children's behaviour reflects that they feel safe and at ease with the adults who care for them.

Children beam with happiness. They are engrossed in their learning and play. They cooperate well with each other. Children are inquisitive and enjoy the experiences outside. Well-trained staff know each child very well and look for opportunities to deepen children's learning.

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

Staff are highly knowledgeable in child development. They are clear about important milestones that children should reach and the actions that should be taken to help children learn. The school works closely with other professionals, such as from healthcare,

to support children in their learning and development. Home visits help staff identify children's educational starting points. Expectations about children attending regularly are made clear to parents. This is so that children can acquire firm foundations in their education and form positive school habits early on.

The prime areas of learning are continually prioritised in children's day-to-day learning. The school thinks about what key learning experiences children of different ages will need to help them develop language, social skills and controlled body movements. Planned activities hook children's interests, and play is effectively used to help children connect what they know in practical and imaginative scenarios.

The school's curriculum is ambitious and fully meets the expectations of the early years foundation stage. Each area of learning has been considered, and staff are clear about the end points children need to reach before starting Reception Year in a new school. However, planning does not precisely identify what essential knowledge children need to grasp along the way. There is not a clear and logical sequence to how this knowledge builds step by step. This means that staff can be unsure of the core purpose behind some activities set up for children inside and outside the classroom.

Communication and language are skilfully developed in children. Staff narrate sentences aloud to help children build their word knowledge. Key vocabulary is regularly repeated to help children hear, say and understand meaning. Diverse stories provide rich experiences to reflect different faiths and cultures. Children learn to see themselves in these stories. Children's listening and attention are excellent.

The specially resourced provision for children with SEND is highly effective. The school has ensured that staff know exactly what to do to help pre-verbal children learn to speak and interact in a school environment. Children who attend benefit from bespoke learning activities to meet their needs. Staff are alert to any additional needs that might present early on in children and they seek advice from other professionals, such as a paediatrician, where appropriate.

The wider development of children is thought about very carefully and the school guides parents in helping children learn table manners, dress independently, use the toilet and brush their teeth. Visitors such as the dentist bring this to life. Children learn about festivals, farm animals and how to look after nature.

Governors are committed and understand their different duties. They check in on the education and welfare of children. Staff speak ever so highly of working at the school. They value the team spirit where everyone pulls together to seek the best for children.

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 all the essential knowledge that children need to know and be able to do. This impacts how well staff then deliver the curriculum through planned activities and how highly children achieve. The school should review its curriculum so that knowledge builds cumulatively towards agreed end points to best support children in starting primary school.

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 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	109760
Local authority	Slough
Inspection number	10296135
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	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mahesh Yanambakkam
Headteacher	Aisha Lateef
Website	www.sloughcentrenursery.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Following a period as interim headteacher, the headteacher became substantive in the role in September 2023.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for up to six children with autism.
- Slough Centre Nursery is part of the TLC Nursery Federation. Its governing body is federated with one other maintained Nursery school in the local authority.
- 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and staff. The lead inspector met with three governors, including the chair. He also met with the local authority's acting group

manager of early years.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and mathematics. To do this, they met with leaders, looked at curriculum plans, had discussions with staff, spoke to children, visited classrooms and outdoor learning environments and observed children learning, playing and interacting with staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- The views of staff and parents were gathered through discussions and Ofsted's online surveys. The team inspector spoke to parents on the morning of the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation and school improvement priorities, policies, curriculum documents, behaviour and attendance records, information about pupils with SEND and minutes of governors' meetings.

Inspection team

James Broadbridge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Debra Anderson

Ofsted Inspector

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