

Tarnerland Nursery School

Address: Sussex Street, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 0GR

Unique reference number (URN): 114350

Inspection report: 21 April 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

The school's well-taught curriculum ensures that all children learn very well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and others with barriers to their learning. Children make substantial progress from their starting points and are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The significant progress children make in their personal, social and emotional development is critical in preparing them for the next stage of their education. For instance, staff are skilled in helping children to recognise their own feelings and those of others. As a result, the younger children develop an increasing ability to play and learn with their classmates, while the older children demonstrate impressive cooperation and negotiation skills.

Children acquire detailed knowledge and skills in early reading, writing and mathematics. High-quality provision for disadvantaged children ensures that they make similar progress to their peers. They make accelerated progress in speaking, listening, and in the ability to build and maintain relationships.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

The school's happy, calm and welcoming atmosphere supports children's learning and behaviour very well. All areas of the school are organised with care to ensure that children can move safely and freely between activities. Highly effective and well-established routines ensure that they feel secure. Children know how they are expected to behave, and they demonstrate a keen sense of fairness. They treat staff and each other with the utmost courtesy and respect. They play and learn together companionably and behave extremely well.

Leaders and staff share the same high expectations of all children. Carefully selected training means that staff are skilled in knowing how to help children to behave well. They understand children's occasional frustrations and work with great sensitivity to help them to understand their emotions. The school provides effective support for children who need extra help with their behaviour.

Leaders consistently promote the value of children being in school as regularly as possible. They work constructively and successfully with families and agencies to make sure that children miss as little school as possible. Children's enjoyment of school is clear, and most attend well. This means children are very well prepared for the transition to primary school.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders are wholly committed to ensuring that all children achieve well. They give a high priority to ensuring that the most vulnerable children in the school benefit from all it has to offer. Staff share leaders' determination to ensure that this is the case. All children benefit from the school's highly inclusive approach. Leaders keep a careful eye on how well children are learning and developing and are quick to spot any concerns.

Leaders work closely with parents to identify children's individual needs and starting points precisely. They make sure that children who have barriers to their learning have the support they need to learn well. Leaders use additional funding effectively to address disadvantaged children's specific needs.

The school is highly successful in supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders use carefully selected training very well. As a result, staff provide highly effective support for children who need extra help. Leaders draw appropriately on specialist advice from agencies, such as the speech and language therapy service, to target children's specific needs. Regular checks on children's progress enable leaders to adjust the support in place as needed. As a result, children with SEND make notable gains in their learning and development.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Leaders ensure that all children benefit from the school's personal development and wellbeing programme, including disadvantaged children. Staff nurture the children in their care. They comfort children who are sad or upset and are always on hand to sort out any minor disagreements. Staff listen carefully to children and respect their views. This ensures that children feel valued and become increasingly confident learners.

Children are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders have designed the curriculum to ensure there are plenty of opportunities for children to talk about their ideas and feelings. The development of reliable speaking and listening skills contributes very well to children's safety and wellbeing. The school promotes fundamental British values in an age-appropriate way. For instance, children learn how democracy works through activities such as voting for a story and respecting the views of others. Children learn about different faiths and beliefs through activities such as role play and celebrations of festivals.

The school curriculum provides a wealth of stimulating activities which help children to learn about the world. Children participate in a range of experiences and visits, such as visiting a beach. During the inspection, children took turns to gaze at the newly hatched ducklings with interest and quiet wonder. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for children to develop creative and artistic talents, such as regular dance sessions. Children require very little encouragement to join in with a story, song or nursery rhyme and love to use the school's musical instruments. Children are encouraged to be physically active through regular activities, such as using the wheeled toys and learning how to climb safely over various obstacles. The school's 'meadow' provides children with valuable learning experiences while interacting with nature.

Expected standard

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have strengthened the curriculum considerably since the last inspection. They have ensured that the content is identified clearly and sequenced appropriately. The school's well-

planned, broad and ambitious curriculum provides a firm framework for teaching. Children benefit from a wide range of well-planned and interesting activities across the curriculum.

Staff teach early phonics skills confidently and effectively. This process starts in the 2- to 3-year-old class, where staff routinely draw attention to the sounds children can hear in words, rhymes and in the world around them. The older children progress to learning early phonics skills. Enjoyment of books is an integral part of school. Staff read stories often and with expression.

Leaders use training well to inform staff subject knowledge. As a result, staff generally deliver the curriculum effectively, adapting activities appropriately in response to children's needs. Generally, opportunities to develop children's communication and social skills are embedded in school life and support children's language and vocabulary development well. Sometimes, however, staff are not sufficiently clear about what they intend children to learn through each activity. As a result, opportunities are missed to build on what children already know and can do.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders and governors are clear about strengths and development priorities in the school's work. They have taken concerted and effective steps to address the next step identified at the time of the previous inspection. Leaders and their staff team have worked together to identify and sequence the content of the curriculum precisely across the school. This has ensured that staff are clearer about how children's learning builds over time than at the time of the last inspection.

Consideration of children's interests is central to any decisions they make and always with a particular focus on supporting vulnerable children. Leaders are determined to provide the very best education for all children. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school.

Leaders have established a positive and cohesive working atmosphere in the school. They choose staff training carefully to reflect individual staff and school development needs. This contributes well to developments in staff subject knowledge and expertise. Leaders and governors use effective strategies to monitor staff wellbeing, such as surveys and informal discussions. Staff report positive teamwork and appreciate the consideration leaders give to their workload and wellbeing. They feel valued and are proud to work in the school.

Governors bring a broad range of knowledge and expertise to their roles. They have established a robust system of checks and balances which ensure that they are well informed about the school's work. Governors take their statutory responsibilities seriously. They successfully combine warm support for leaders with appropriate challenge.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Children thoroughly enjoy their time here. They are keen to get started when they arrive in the morning and join in with activities enthusiastically. Well-established routines and a wide

range of appealing activities mean that children are soon absorbed in playing and learning, both indoors and out. All areas are supervised appropriately so that they can play and learn safely. Parents and carers have every confidence in the school to take good care of their children, and rightly so.

The school's calm and nurturing atmosphere makes a significant contribution to children's wellbeing and enjoyment of school. Staff are sensitive to children's needs and provide lots of encouragement and reassurance. Children are very well cared for and feel secure as a result. They enjoy playing with friends, grow rapidly in confidence and behave extremely well.

Children make substantial progress from their starting points across all areas of the curriculum. As a result, they are extremely well prepared for the move to Reception Year. The school makes sure that children are equipped with the personal, emotional and social skills required to access learning successfully. For instance, they learn how to play with others nicely by sharing, taking turns and being considerate. Staff sort out occasional minor disagreements sensitively and discretely.

Staff support children's growing independence skilfully. Right from children's earliest days in the 2- to 3-year-old class to their final months in the oldest class, they learn how to look after themselves with increasing success. For example, they are taught the importance of washing their hands after using the toilet, learn how to put their coats on and help to tidy up.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue work to ensure that staff are consistently clear about the purpose and learning focus of activities so that opportunities to build children's knowledge and skills are maximised.
 - Leaders and those responsible for governance should maintain their focus on ensuring consistently strong standards across all areas of the school's work.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Ella Turner.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other members of staff. They also spoke with a representative of the local authority. The lead inspector met with members of the board of governors, including the chair.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school has a separate early years registration for children aged under 2. This provision is inspected separately.

The school does not use any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Louise Collings

Lead inspector:

Julie Sackett, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Linda Appleby, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 21 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

92

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

22.8%

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

0.00%

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

10.87%

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

Location deprivation

Close to average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Our grades explained

Exceptional ●

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard ●

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard ●

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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