

# Ightenhill Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119071
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379724
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Sarah Quinn

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	64
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sarah Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pauline Robinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 May 2009
<b>School address</b>	Lionel Street Burnley
<b>Telephone number</b>	01282 427154
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Sarah Quinn

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector spent seven hours observing direct teaching and independent, continuous learning; four staff were seen. As well as speaking to children, she met with parents, staff and members of the governing body. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at observation, assessment and planning records, policies and management documentation in relation to safeguarding and health and safety. She scrutinised examples of children's 'learning journeys' as well as other documentation relating to children's achievement. The inspector took account of questionnaires completed by staff and 36 parents and carers.

## Information about the school

This is an average sized nursery school compared to other nursery schools nationally. It has places for 70 children attending part time with 40 children in the morning session and 30 in the afternoon. Children are generally admitted the term after their third birthday. On leaving the school, children transfer to a range of at least seven primary schools. Most children have a White British heritage and a minority of children attend with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are no children with English as an additional language.

There is a privately run Early Years provision on site called Munchkins Club that offers pre-school childcare and education and provides sessions in addition to those offered at the school. This setting receives its own inspection and the report is available on the Ofsted website at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Achievement of children</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of children</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>1</b>

## Key Findings

- Ightenhill Nursery School is an outstanding school. From starting points that are generally below national expectations, children progress rapidly across the six areas of learning to levels of development that are above, and in some cases, well-above national expectations.
- Staff know children’s strengths, weaknesses and interests exceptionally well. Next step planning is swift and effective and ensures sustained and rapid progress towards the Early Learning goals.
- Teaching is outstanding and staff interaction with children is excellent and promotes creativity, critical thinking and problem solving. There are, however, fewer opportunities for children to solve problems independently during their continuous play.
- Leaders and managers are very clear about the direction of the school and drive improvement relentlessly. Performance management of staff is very effective and is linked directly to children’s achievement. Training is attended by staff and changes are quickly and effectively implemented as a result of their learning.
- School self-evaluation is comprehensive and accurately judges the effective impact the school has on children’s achievement. This ensures that the school has an excellent capacity for continual improvement.
- Children show high levels of curiosity and delight as exciting activities are revealed by staff. They engage very well with staff and each other and sustain their concentration and persistence during difficult or complex tasks.
- Excellent routines and high expectations ensure that children’s outstanding behaviour contributes to their learning and they remain safe and secure at all

times. Children respond remarkably well to the high expectations of staff and there is an atmosphere of mutual respect and calm.

- Children thoroughly enjoy attending Ightenhill Nursery School and parents/carers are overwhelmingly positive about the nursery. They say children are sad when they go home and want to attend at the weekend!

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Develop further opportunities for children to think creatively and critically, to support their use of problem solving skills throughout their independent play and exploration.

## **Main Report**

### **Achievement of children**

Children's achievement is outstanding. They make rapid strides in their learning and development from, in most cases, low starting points and achieve well-above national expectations. When they leave the nursery school, some children are achieving some of the Early Learning goals and this represents excellent progress. The progress they make in personal, social and emotional development is particularly striking and children very quickly develop independence and very positive attitudes to learning.

Children learn in a calm and respectful environment where they acquire resilience and persistence. They choose from a range of thoughtfully planned activities and focused staff led sessions. They initiate much of their own play and staff skilfully interact with them to challenge and support their learning.

Children laugh, giggle and show high levels of enjoyment as they explore their environment, for example, they develop their knowledge and understanding of the world as they make bird feeders and talk about wild birds. They enjoy the beautiful outdoor area and run together enjoying the sense of freedom as they trail ribbons in the wind or hunt for 'bears'. During group times they work with their friends to sort dog bones according to size for the right dog. In the home areas they develop ideas alongside each other or together and play for long periods using skills learned in staff led sessions. Children benefit from developing their communication, language and literacy skills as they write letters in the office area and write their names on the computer, changing the colour and font and delighting in the results. They take pleasure in painting pictures and making models of aeroplanes and cars with boxes and a wide range of materials.

Staff skilfully develop children's learning skills as they learn and problem solve alongside them. The environment does not always support creative and critical thinking to enable children to problem solve for themselves. Children are confident and communicate well and show great humour. During a counting game a child exclaims, 'I can only count to two so be quick!' Children are great friends and support each other very well, sharing and cooperating.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported very well and make excellent progress in line with that of their peers. Children follow personalised programmes that support their individual needs and staff work extremely well with children and families. There are no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls. Children are very well prepared for the next stage in their learning and parents are very pleased with their children's rate of progress.

### **Quality of teaching**

All staff have in depth knowledge of each child's developmental stage and the identified priorities to move their learning forward. This is because they work very well as a strong and focused team and plan twice a week for each child. Staff know the Early Years Foundation Stage well and plan for every area of learning, recognising how activities can support more than one area of learning. Key workers make detailed observations about the children in their group and also of other significant milestones for other children. They consider carefully ways to engage different groups of children, for example, by planning activities that appeal to boys or girls.

Almost all children make exceptional progress because teaching is outstanding. Staff are extremely skilful in their interaction with children; they are patient and calm and allow learning to develop naturally. Staff use skilful questioning skills, for example, to develop children's understanding of reflection as they realise that their white boards cause reflections on the ceiling. Children respond very well to extremely high expectations of behaviour and learning; understanding what is expected of them. Parents and carers are extremely positive about staff and teaching and say that their children make rapid gains in their learning.

Staff very effectively promote children's basic skills in reading and communication through most activities. They develop children's listening and communication skills through music based listening activities and much talk in groups and pairs. Staff are enthusiastic and inspire awe and wonder in children as they find worms in the soil, watch the birds flying in the sky and play with dinosaurs in the logs. Staff are well deployed according to their strengths and the courses they attend are quickly used to support children's learning. All children learn hand-signing and with staff use singing when singing songs to support individual children's needs.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are quickly identified and given help. Staff support children's learning well and work closely with parents and carers. They continually communicate with parents and carers to ensure that the activities they provide for individuals are appropriate and they also help parents and carers by providing activities for them to do at home with their children.

### **Behaviour and safety of children**

The behaviour and safety of children are outstanding. Children say they feel very safe and they demonstrate a very good awareness of how to assess risk, for example, when they hop over the stepping stones and secure the ladder on the climbing frame. They support and help each other, for example, guiding each other

up the stairs with their toys. Children understand how to keep themselves healthy by eating the right food, running and exercising on the wheeled vehicles.

Attendance is very well managed and families are supported by staff when they struggle to get their children in to nursery each day. Behaviour management is consistent and is based on respect and maintaining a calm environment. Positive behaviour is rewarded and promoted and children respond well to create an atmosphere of calm and well being.

Parents and carers are impressed by the safety initiatives employed by the school and comment that, 'The staff have been fabulous in helping my daughter feel safe and settled in.' They also state that behaviour is extremely good and this is because, 'The standards are exceptional.' Behaviour is closely monitored and any incidents are responded to immediately and rarely recur. This is because staff have in depth knowledge and understanding of child development and how to support positive behaviour at different stages of children's development. Very positive attitudes to learning contribute well to learning and development.

### **Leadership and management**

Leadership and management are outstanding at all levels. Improvements at the nursery are rapid as leaders and managers, parents, staff and governors work tirelessly to ensure that every individual child receives the highest quality opportunities. Self-evaluation includes all stakeholders and identifies quickly issues that may need addressing. Strengths are celebrated and built upon. Because of this continual drive for improvement, the school has made very effective changes since the last inspection to ensure that children continue to achieve well. The school has an excellent capacity to continually improve.

Staff are deployed according to their strengths and interests and attend a range of training courses. Learning from courses is disseminated to the rest of the staff and the most relevant and appropriate aspects are used to support and further children's learning and development.

Parents recognise the strong leadership and management of the setting and say, 'The staff run a well organised nursery and are a credit to the education system.' Parents/carers are well informed and involved in their children's learning and say, 'They (staff) provide good communication and the environment has allowed my son's personality to shine.' Governors are fully involved in the nursery and enjoy working with the children and staff. They regularly monitor the safety and achievements of children to ensure that quality remains at a very high standard. Strong relationships with other local providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage, like the primary schools, enable the nursery to prepare children for transition into school.

Staff work diligently with specialist agencies and families to ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported and make excellent progress. Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements to a high standard. The Early Years Foundation Stage practice guidance supports planning and ensures a very good balance of activities and opportunities across all areas of learning. The curriculum is outstanding. Leaders and managers at all levels,

including governors, promote equality and tackle discrimination. They continually monitor the provision to ensure that it meets the needs of all children and promote respect throughout the whole nursery.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, expertly promoted throughout continuous play and focused activities. Feedback from parents and carers is overwhelmingly positive and they say, 'My child has an added 'sparkle' since starting here. This nursery is in a different league,' and, 'I would highly recommend this nursery to other parents/carers.'



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its children. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes ( see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

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## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the child's work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well children acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the children's attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



16 January 2012

Dear Children

**Inspection of Ightenhill Nursery School, Burnley BB12 6DY**

Thank you for making me so welcome when I inspected your school. I really enjoyed watching some of your exciting activities like playing in the sand and making bird feeders to hang from the trees. You all enjoy yourselves so much and you learn lots of new things very quickly. That is why your school is outstanding.

Your staff care a great deal about you and want you to do very well before you move on to your next school. This is why they plan activities to help you to learn your numbers, letters and also about the world around you. Your 'learning journeys' are a beautiful record of the excellent progress that you make.

Your staff are always trying to find ways to make your nursery even better. This is why they change things and try new ideas. They try very hard to help you to stay safe and it was lovely to see you helping each other. You behave very well and keep the nursery clean and tidy.

It is super that you like to play with each other, with the staff, and sometimes on your own. I want the staff to think about problems that they can give you to solve on your own or with your friends. This will help you to become even more confident and independent.

Keep on helping each other and have a wonderful time at your nursery.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Quinn  
Lead inspector

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