

Hindley Sure Start Nursery

Inspection report

Unique reference number	106397
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	384869
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2012
Lead inspector	Gill Jones HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	115
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Haskayne
Headteacher	Rachel Lewis
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2010
School address	Mornington Road Hindley Wigan Lancashire
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Age group	3 - 5
Inspection date(s)	25-26 January 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Gill Jones

Her Majesty's Inspector

This inspection was carried out at no notice. The inspector observed learning activities in the nursery for a total of nine hours. All staff were observed teaching, including the headteacher. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff, parents and a family link worker from the children's centre, which is on the same site. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at some of the documentation, including children's records of achievement and progress data.

Information about the school

This is a 120 place nursery for three and four year olds. Most children who attend the nursery are of White British heritage and live on the surrounding housing estates. The proportion of children from minority ethnic backgrounds is small but increasing. Children attend the nursery part time. Some stay in school for the lunch club, which is managed by the governing body. Children join the nursery in September, January or April each year, depending on their age.

The school shares the building with the Sure Start children's centre. When the school was inspected in May 2010, it was judged to require special measures. Subsequently, the school received monitoring inspections on three occasions. At the last monitoring inspection the school was judged to be making good progress. The headteacher manages the school and the Children's Centre. There are separate governance arrangements for the school and children's centre. Since the last inspection there have been significant changes to staffing.

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

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- In accordance with S13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.
- This is a good school. Outstanding leadership by the headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher and governing body, has transformed the school over the past 18 months. Difficult staffing issues have been tackled effectively. A strong staff team sharing high expectations for children’s achievement now work exceptionally well together and morale is high.
- The majority of children start the nursery with levels of development that are below and sometimes well below those typical for their age. By the time they leave, a very large majority have developed skills, knowledge and understanding that are typical of those expected of three- and four-year-olds. A small minority of children are able to read and write regular three letter words such as ‘cat’ and all listen attentively to stories and join in enthusiastically. Children’s achievement is not outstanding because those who are most vulnerable do not make fast enough progress in their communication, language and literacy skills.
- Teaching is good. Staff plan the curriculum well. They develop children’s skills and abilities effectively through a good balance of taught activities and play, both indoors and outdoors. However, some targeted language activities are occasionally too challenging for the most vulnerable children’s level of development and understanding.
- Children’s behaviour is good. During the inspection a large proportion of children were new starters at the nursery. They have already learnt the nursery routines of ‘good listening, good looking, good sitting and good walking’. Children are keen to join in the activities and respond enthusiastically. Staff manage children’s behaviour well; they are effective in teaching children to learn self-control.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of progress made by the most vulnerable children, so that a greater proportion meet age-related expectations in their communication, language and literacy development by:
 - continuing to target teaching to small groups or individuals
 - developing staff skills in teaching early reading and language for communication
 - ensuring that all staff plan focused activities which match the child's level of understanding and communication skills well
 - using a structured literacy development programme systematically
 - working closely with the children's centre to secure regular targeted literacy support for the most vulnerable children and their families.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children make good progress across all the areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Their progress in early number work is slightly better than in communication, language and literacy. The large majority have developed the skills and abilities they need to prepare them well for starting Reception. Children enjoy the activities provided both indoors and outdoors and are confident to talk to adults as they play. During the inspection, they were keen to share stories about 'Millie' the class rabbit. They repeated the experience of taking Millie to the vet in their role play, commenting: 'Please help, my rabbit is poorly and needs an injection.' Other children were fascinated by some African large snails in the class vivarium (a small fish tank). 'Look, I can see its mouth', 'It's had babies, they're tiny', and 'It's sucking up cucumber', were among the observations made by a small group of children observing the snails with a teacher.

In a good activity targeted to increase children's vocabulary, children with limited language were encouraged by the teacher to describe the sounds they could make outside using a wooden hammer. They were excited by the bell like sound made on the bench and one boy said, 'It's jingle bells', demonstrating his ability to match a sound to a well known song. However, in another focused activity where children were listening to recorded sounds, they were not confident in their responses because it was too challenging for their level of development.

Children are developing independence particularly well. They are learning to help themselves to their fruit snack and to pour a drink of water from a jug into a cup. At the end of each session they join in enthusiastically with tidy-up time, but a few get distracted and start playing again. Children enjoy looking at the photographs of them taking part in baking, dough making, painting and other activities. Many are confident recalling their experiences with their parents and/or carers, staff and other adults.

Quality of teaching

Staff value and respect each child as a unique individual. They assess children's levels of skills and abilities accurately and the information is used effectively to set ambitious targets for children's progress. Each child starts and ends every session in a small group with their key worker. The key worker knows the children well and leads the daily routine of greeting each other, practising their counting, matching the letter to the sound, learning the days of the week and talking about the weather. Staff talk with parents and carers regularly, ensuring that home and school work together to help children to learn as quickly as they are able. Any concerns are dealt with effectively and parents spoken to say they are confident their children are happy at school and appreciate how well their children are learning.

Staff design activities well, building them around children's natural curiosity. Teaching enables most children to make strides in their development because staff guide and support them well, knowing when to intervene. For example, during an outdoor activity using the large climbing frame, a child became nervous and wanted to be carried. The teacher guided the child across the stepping stones by the hand and rather than lifting the child off, helped her by saying, 'If you sit here you will be able to manage it yourself', which enabled the child to achieve the activity and to try again with more confidence. However, in small group targeted work, activities sometimes provide too much challenge for the children's level of understanding. For example, in a game of animal lotto, the children had too much choice to match the sound to the animal, slowing their progress.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Staff manage children's behaviour well. Children start each session by choosing activities and they immediately become interested and concentrate well. They play well along side each other and are beginning to help each other, particularly when they are tidying up. Children know the class routines well and are confident to use all the space available to them sensibly. Their levels of concentration are good and it is common to see children engaged in the same activity for an appropriate period of time.

Children's behaviour in taught activities is good. In 'group time' they are beginning to listen to each other well and some respond to each other's comments. They listen to stories attentively and join in with counting and rhyming patterns enthusiastically. They enjoy taking turns with the 'magic stick' to count the number of children in the group and are learning how to take turns. Occasionally, children want to play with the same toy. Staff deal with this well and the children are learning how to share. Parents say their children 'love going to nursery'; consequently, the attendance of most children is good. Where a child's attendance is poor, the school works effectively with the children's centre to support parents to get their children into school.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, supported effectively by the deputy headteacher, has worked

systematically and relentlessly over the past 18 months to transform the nursery into a vibrant, exciting place for young children to learn. Her expectations are high. She has supported staff outstandingly well, ensuring that her vision and excellent plans for the nursery are shared. Children's achievements are presented by staff in beautiful books, full of photographs and quotations, which are shared with parents and/or carers regularly. This celebration of achievement demonstrates the leadership's high expectations and contributes well to the promotion of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents appreciate it. One said: 'I love looking at the achievement book with my son; he's come on so much, it is something I will treasure for ever'.

Children's progress is tracked closely. Staff are vigilant and consequently children's progress and health, safety and welfare needs are safeguarded well. Where children are behind the age-related expectations in any of the Early Years Foundation Stage areas of learning, but particularly in number, communication skills or their personal, social and emotional development, additional support is provided quickly. This is increasing the children's rate of progress rapidly and has improved children's achievement significantly, so that it is now good. Senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching exceptionally closely. Performance management is highly effective and, as a result, excellent targeted support and training has been provided for staff to improve their teaching skills, particularly of communication, language and literacy. Staff are keen to learn from each other's strengths. The governing body has been strengthened since the last inspection and governors are now offering a good level of challenge to the school. They have taken strong and timely action in dealing with difficult staffing issues, which has secured outstanding progress since the last monitoring inspection. The local authority has provided a good level of support to the school on its journey out of special measures. All staff are highly committed to improving the quality of education they provide for each child, evident in the outstanding improvements made since the last inspection. Consequently, the school demonstrates very strong capacity for continuous improvement.

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 pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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 pupils. 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).

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.

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 pupils' 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 pupils 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 pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' 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.



27 January 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Hindley Surestart Nursery, Wigan, WN2 4LG

Congratulations! On my recent visit I judged that your school no longer requires special measures and that it is now a good school.

On each of my four visits since September 2010 I have enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn. I am impressed by how much your nursery has improved. You now work together sensibly and play nicely, both indoors and outdoors. You are very good helpers at 'tidy-up time' and you make sure that you put all the toys away carefully. You do 'good listening, good watching, and good walking'. Your parents told me that they are really pleased with how quickly you are learning your numbers and new words and how much they like the black books showing pictures of you learning as you play.

Rachel and all the other staff have worked outstandingly well to make sure that the nursery is a safe and interesting place for you to learn. It is clear to see how much you enjoy the activities, playing in the soapy water, making dough, looking at the giant snails, making dens, building in the builder's yard and looking after Millie, your rabbit. You have lots of interesting things to do every day that help you to learn new skills. Rachel and Nicola know how to keep improving your nursery and have excellent plans for the future. To make your nursery even better I have asked them to:

- increase the progress made by the children who find it most difficult to speak and listen, so that they are well prepared to start their next school.

I hope you will invite me back to see you again in the future. Keep doing your 'good learning' and I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Gill Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector

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