

# Ashworth Nursery School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119091
<b>Local authority</b>	Blackburn with Darwen
<b>Inspection number</b>	379726
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29 February 2012–1 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Karen Ling

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

---

<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>	102
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Acting Chair</b>	Heather Bulcock
<b>Acting Headteacher</b>	Hilda Harries
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 September 2008
<b>School address</b>	Addison Close Blackburn BB2 1QU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01254 263312
<b>Fax number</b>	01254 263312
<b>Email address</b>	ashworth@blackburn.gov.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–4
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	29 February 2012–01 March 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	379726



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



© Crown copyright 2012

---

## Introduction

Inspection team

Karen Ling

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with three days' notice. The inspector spent six and a half hours observing teaching across indoor and outdoor provision, involving eight qualified teaching staff and practitioners. Discussions were held with parents and carers, children, governors and staff. The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised documents relating to self-evaluation, safeguarding, baseline assessment, and staff planning and assessment. Thirty-seven questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed. There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized nursery school. It offers part-time provision during school terms from 8.45am to 11.45am and from 12.45pm to 3.45pm. Children are admitted into nursery school at different times during the school year following their third birthday. The school population represents a breadth of cultural diversity. A high proportion is British-born Asian, mainly of Pakistani heritage. Approximately 40% of children join the school with little or no spoken English. Fifteen per cent of children have statements related to their disabilities or special educational needs.

Since the last inspection, the proposals for federation with the local primary school have been withdrawn. The current acting headteacher has been in post since September 2011. The governing body has an acting chair in place following the resignation of the previous Chair of the Governing Body in July 2011.

**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>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a good school. The ambitious vision of the acting headteacher and high standards she sets are shared with staff and the quality of provision is improving. Achievement for all groups of children is good. The promotion of communication and language skills is given high importance and support for children with English as an additional language is very good. Effective partnerships with external agencies ensure that disabled children and those who have special educational needs receive the specialist support required.
- This is not an outstanding school because the relative weaknesses in assessment do not yet lead to outstanding teaching and achievement and there is some uncertainty about the management of the school. Whilst current leaders and managers are highly-committed and supportive the temporary nature of key posts over recent years has made it difficult to sustain improvements in provision and outcomes. Although staff have a good understanding of children’s capabilities, the assessment and observation process is not yet sufficiently systematic and matched to the expectations of developmental stages towards the early learning goals. The vast majority of parents and carers speak positively of the information they receive about how well their child is doing. However, the current recording format does not clearly show children’s progress across the areas of learning.
- Teaching is good. Staff knowledge of each child, the clear routines and careful organisation of space and resources, effectively meet children’s diverse needs and interests. Teaching builds on what children know and can do and staff skilfully move between children’s home language and English.
- Children behave very well much of the time because staff set high expectations and apply strategies consistently. Staff are highly attentive to children’s welfare needs. Trusting relationships are formed with adults because children feel safe in their surroundings. They play and learn independently and share and take turns in group activities.

- The acting headteacher and governing body channel their skills and efforts to good effect. Professional development is focussed well and increased accountability for the performance of all staff is leading to improved teaching. The curriculum is organised well and provides a wealth of well-planned purposeful activities.

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

- Develop systematic assessment and observations which are matched to the expectations of the early learning goals so that:
  - staff have a clear overview of each child’s progress in all aspects of learning and use information to teach and support next steps in learning and development
  - information is used to engage parents and carers on a regular basis in their child’s learning and development and inform them of the progress being made.
- Secure the leadership and management of the school so that the quality of provision and the outcomes for children continue to improve.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

‘My child loves nursery and is doing really well’ is a comment supported by many parents and carers. This view of parents and carers is accurate and all children achieve well over time. The many children who enter school with little or no spoken English make rapid progress in acquiring language skills. Disabled children and those who have special educational needs flourish and make good progress because of skilful support from staff and external agencies. Overall progress is good and children make most progress in personal, social and emotional development, and communication, language and literacy skills. For the great majority, these skills are well below those expected for their age when they arrive. Although on leaving most children still have some skills and knowledge that are below expectations, the gap has been significantly closed in personal, social and emotional development where more children now reach the expected level. More-able children reach higher levels than expected for their age in some aspects.

Observations during the day indicate good progress. Children form close relationships with staff who ensure that they feel included, secure and valued. Staff encourage a positive attitude which helps children to settle into the daily routine and engage in learning. Over time, they develop good levels of confidence and independence. Children show regard for others as they play and share equipment. For example, children encouraged one another in the role play area as they discussed ways of constructing a building with wooden blocks. They develop personal independence in matters of dressing and hygiene and become increasingly self-sufficient in choosing activities and selecting resources for themselves.

Children benefit from the rich and varied language activities. They listen and respond with enjoyment to favourite stories, such as Jack and the Beanstalk. They use the interactive white board to sing along to nursery rhymes. With adult support they sequence events in a story and then try on their own. The book area is exceptionally popular. Children show good

levels of concentration as they study illustrations, turning pages carefully. They confidently ask adults to read stories to them and sustain attentive listening in group times. Children learning English try new vocabulary and explore the meaning and sounds when modelled by staff. Boys and girls show an interest in writing and some show developing dexterity as they use pencils effectively to form recognisable letters. They are very proud of their efforts and keenly talk to adults about what they have done. Children relish opportunities to play outside. They show good spatial awareness as they manoeuvre wheeled toys and develop hand-to-eye coordination as they pass, throw and kick balls.

## **Quality of teaching**

The parents' and carers' view of teaching is accurate. Teaching is good with a strength in the planning of purposeful activities and the use of a wide range of teaching methods to promote learning. They demonstrate how to do new things and ensure that children have sufficient time to complete activities. They ask searching questions and use a variety of props and resources to sustain children's interest and extend children's love of learning and spirituality. Staff take advantage of unforeseen opportunities. For example, when a bug landed on the table, staff helped children to observe the patterns on its body. They use group time to focus on individual needs, for example, to build on, practise and reinforce English vocabulary. Staff are very skilful at moving in and out of the child's home language as appropriate to check understanding and explain meaning. One-to-one support, signs, symbols and visual materials support children in their understanding. Staff provide a range of opportunities for them to use their home language, so that their developing use of English and other languages support one another.

The teaching of letters and their sounds and numeracy in small groups is very effective. Children are introduced to 'Metal Mike' and 'Cheeky monkey' which holds their attention well and involves them in practical and exciting ways. Staff skilfully ask questions to make children think and solve problems; teaching has a good pace and provides progressive challenge for all.

Staff use their skills well to stimulate and challenge children. For example, in a counting activity, staff explained and modelled the number of objects needed to match the numeral. They carefully monitor who has completed set activities, such as planting seeds to ensure everyone has the opportunity. Whenever possible, children are encouraged to express their ideas.

Staff assess what children can do but this has, until recently, tended to be informal rather than systematic. Although staff know what children can do, information is not used efficiently to monitor progress in relation to the early learning goals. Consequently, the overview of progress for all aspects of the curriculum and next steps in learning for each child is not clear.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Robust policies underpin safe procedures and the well-being of children and their families. Parents and carers are extremely positive about the safety and behaviour of their children. An atmosphere of racial harmony and tolerance runs through the nursery school. Children say that staff are kind and helpful and they enjoy playing with their friends. They like coming to nursery school and learn how to keep themselves safe. This was evident as staff carefully explained to a child how to ascend and descend the climbing apparatus safely.

Most children attend regularly and the school works with families to encourage a positive culture and understanding of the benefits of regular attendance.

Personal, social and emotional development is given high priority and underpins children's good achievement. Behaviour is good over time and exemplary on occasions. This is because staff set good role models and consistent expectations for behaviour. Children are helped to learn what is right and wrong as staff sensitively deal with the few instances of unacceptable behaviour. Staff skilfully support moral development through well-chosen stories and sensitive discussions of incidents that arise in the course of everyday events. They support children to learn personal values such as honesty, fairness and respect for one another. For example, family customs and religious beliefs are shared through children's exploration of similarities and differences.

## **Leadership and management**

The acting headteacher provides strong and ambitious leadership for the school and is well-supported by the governing body and acting chair. Conscientious administrators and support staff ensure that the school runs smoothly day-to-day. Although there remains a level of instability amongst staffing and the post for headteacher has yet to be advertised, the school has an accurate evaluation of areas for improvement. The dynamic vision and tireless drive of the acting headteacher set an ethos of commitment and willingness amongst staff to develop further. Through professional development and day-to-day management, she has supported staff to become more accountable for their roles and responsibilities. This is already having an impact and teaching skills are improving, although areas of assessment have yet to improve.

In recent weeks a strategy has been introduced for collecting incidental observations of achievement. This system has yet to be embedded to utilise the information gathered effectively. In addition an assessment system linked specifically to the acquisition of language for children speaking English as an additional language has been introduced. This has produced a more astute analysis of progression for this area of development. Consequently, staff have a clearer picture of children's comprehension and skill in their home language, resulting in more accurate expectations for this group of children. The range of effective adjustments made since the last inspection and evidence of sustained improvement are evidence that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

The curriculum is rich and varied and provides an appropriate balance of adult-directed and self-chosen activity. The outdoor provision has improved since the last inspection to offer more space, variety and challenge. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well. The school engages with parents and carers well and provides daily verbal exchange about how well children are doing. Although meetings are arranged to discuss children's progress, children's records do not give a sufficiently detailed overview of progress over time. The school actively and successfully promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination. Staff work closely with parents and carers to identify those with special educational needs and with parents and carers of disabled children responding quickly to any area of particular difficulty. Effective learning opportunities help children develop English and support is provided to help them take part in other activities. Staff work collaboratively with staff from other agencies to provide effective learning opportunities for individual children. Safeguarding meets statutory requirements and gives no cause for concern.

## 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](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 up 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.
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.**



2 March 2012

Dear Children

**Inspection of Ashworth Nursery School, Blackburn BB2 1QU**

I really enjoyed visiting your nursery school recently. Thank you for sharing your games and books with me. I love reading and listening to stories and I am glad that you do too. I was also very pleased to see how much you love to play outside in the fresh air. It is so important that you do this as much as possible to keep fit and healthy. I was very impressed with how much you learn. This is because your teachers are good at helping you manage to do things you have not done before. A lot of you do not know how to speak English when you first start. But look at how well you are doing now! Your teachers look after you very well and work very well with people who come into school to help those of you who need special help.

Like you, your teachers are always trying to get even better at what they do. They know what you can do and keep records of your achievements. I have asked them to become even better at this so that they can help you get even better at what you know and can do and can share these records with your parents and carers.

Your acting headteacher and the people, who look after your school, called 'governors' do a really good job. Since your acting headteacher started in September she has made a lot of changes that are making your nursery school even better. I have asked the school to appoint a headteacher and a Chair of the Governing Body so that the good work continues.

I send you and your families my very best wishes and hope you continue to enjoy school.

Yours sincerely

Karen Ling  
Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).