

# McMillan Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119095
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358492
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sheila Mawer

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>	94
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sheila Wicks
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Gillian Wroe
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	Railway Street Nelson Lancashire BB9 9AG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01282 612709
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited six sessions and saw four teachers and 10 practitioners who work directly with the children. Meetings were held with staff and a representative of the governing body, as well as talking to the children and their parents and carers. In observing the school's work, a range of documents were examined, including the school improvement plan, the tracking of children's progress, safeguarding procedures, minutes from governing body meetings and children's completed learning journals over the past two years. Account was also taken of the views expressed in the 14 questionnaires completed by staff and 24 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- How well the school has adapted its provision to meet the needs of the high proportion of children who speak English as an additional language.
- How well the children are being observed in the first few weeks of school to identify and plan for their needs.
- Whether the actions taken by school's leaders are sustaining outstanding provision.

## Information about the school

This average size nursery school provides part-time education for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children enter the school in September and complete a full year. Over three-quarters of the children are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Close to half of these children speak English as an additional language and receive bilingual support. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school operates a staggered entry from the beginning of September and at the time of the inspection some children had only been in school for a week. The school shares its building with a privately managed day-care facility for children and their families called the Offsprings Nursery. This provision did not form part of this inspection.

**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: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

McMillan Nursery gives children an outstanding start to their education. It continues to provide an excellent foundation for learning and development. Its success centres firmly on the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and a team of exceptionally skilled staff who set high expectations for themselves and every child. They are totally committed to the children's success, happiness and well-being. Never complacent, they have worked successfully since the last inspection to extend the outdoor area into an exciting place where children thrive. Careful planning and organisation has produced a safe and secure area, but still gives children wonderful opportunities for adventurous play. Engagement with parents, carers and families has also improved and is a key strength of the school. It enables learning, support and excellent community cohesion to extend well beyond the school gates. Rigorous self-evaluation and strong and effective shared leadership ensure that the school maintains its high quality and moves on successfully. By building further on its considerable strengths it has an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement. Although the governing body are very effective in making sure that children and staff are safe in school, they are not fully involved in shaping the direction of the school.

Children thoroughly enjoy playing and learning together, because the school is a truly magical place in which to learn. They become totally involved in their activities, as the curriculum is firmly based on their interests and needs. As they gain in confidence they devise their own rules for playing safely and maintaining excellent behaviour. This raises their levels of responsibility, independence and self-esteem. Outstanding care, excellent teaching and high quality resources provide each child with equal opportunities to succeed. This particularly applies to children with English as an additional language. Excellent bilingual support is used to help these children to access all aspects of the curriculum and to learn exceptionally well. A significant strength of the excellent provision is the way that staff use daily observations of children's learning to set up enhancement activities that will meet their needs. These challenging activities help all children and especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities to quickly reach the next steps in their development. Within just one year, the skills of all groups of learners develop rapidly and they make excellent progress. Most leave the school with skills that are broadly in line with expectations.

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

- Improve the effectiveness of the governing body, by:
  - working more closely with teachers and staff to know the school better
  - becoming more involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's
- performance.

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## Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

**1**

Although the children have just started school they have settled in quickly through excellent induction procedures and very caring staff. Most children start school with skills that are well below those expected for their age. As soon as they self-register their names, they happily join their friends and participate in a wealth of activities with great enjoyment. They quickly begin to plan their own learning and make decisions. For example, one child collected his own resources and made binoculars to study the birds in the woodland. Another, in imaginative play, used oven gloves to remove cakes from a 'hot' oven. Children with English as an additional language also busy themselves with different tasks. Excellent bilingual support gives them a strong sense of security and the confidence to join in songs and rhymes. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are equally keen to participate because support is fully directed towards their interests and needs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is excellent. As well as showing real delight at new experiences, especially in 'Bob's Yard,' the children strongly respect each other's differences and value one other as individuals. By the time they leave the school, most reach the expected skills for their age and are very well prepared for the next steps in their education. They make excellent progress and achieve well in all areas of their learning.

Good attendance and punctuality reflect the children's keenness to learn and try out new things. They are given free access to an exceptionally rich learning environment indoors and outside and they acquire an excellent awareness of safety. The climbing wall is a favourite activity for many children to keep active and to take well considered risks. Children are exceptionally well behaved. They quickly adopt rigorous hygiene rules and healthy eating. They thoroughly enjoy nutritious snacks and are happy to try out different fruits, knowing they are good for them. Although still settling into school routines, children are already helping each other with activities and tidying up afterwards. They enjoy being the 'helper of the day' and carrying out responsibilities in their group.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

*These are the grades for children's outcomes*

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	3
Children's attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of children's learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which children feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Children's behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	2
Children's attendance <sup>1</sup>	
<b>The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Highly experienced and skilled practitioners, with an excellent knowledge of how young children learn are a key feature of the school's outstanding provision. The excellent planning of activities fully reflects the children's cultural backgrounds and their individual needs. Daily observations are used to provide child-led activities that build on their experiences, alongside short adult-led sessions. A well-established key person system and consistent routines ensure very effective supervision and support. During story time, bilingual staff make a considerable contribution to the learning made by children with English as an additional language, by telling the story in the children's own language. This enables all children to fully participate in the session. The use of assessment to support the learning is excellent. All activities are based on assessing the next steps in each child's learning, which are identified daily. Staff are aware that the 'learning journals', while giving them a good picture of each child's progress are not shared enough with children and their families. This is being addressed through easier access for children and their families to review the 'learning journals.'

Children's interests and well-being are taken fully into account when planning the curriculum. Their diverse cultural backgrounds are celebrated widely in the provision and through the outstanding learning environment. Visits and visitors are used widely to enrich provision and provide memorable first-hand experiences. There are also plenty of

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opportunities for the children to use new technology. The 'microwave' for example is in constant use in the home corner.

Children are exceptionally well supported and nurtured throughout their time in the school. The school employs its own speech and language therapist, to make sure that the children are assessed quickly and their needs addressed. The support from outside agencies for the most vulnerable children and their families is very effective. Any barriers to learning are significantly reduced through these early interventions.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The school is driven forward by outstanding leaders and managers at all levels. The headteacher's clear vision for maintaining excellence and driving improvement is strongly supported by all staff. Their widely shared responsibility for leading and managing the school is very effective in ensuring consistency in provision and outstanding outcomes. Through very effective teamwork, the quality of teaching and learning is constantly being challenged, reviewed and improved. All staff know what is expected of them and they willingly meet demanding expectations. The governing body perform their statutory duties well and their effectiveness is satisfactory. For example, they make sure that safeguarding procedures and practices are highly effective and fully meet government requirements. Staff receive excellent training and risk assessments are rigorously applied, especially in the extensive outdoor area. Although the governing body are supportive of the school, they are not fully involved in reviewing and evaluating the impact of the various aspects of the school's work.

The challenging aims of the school to provide the best opportunities for every child to succeed are well and truly met in this inclusive school. Everyone successfully tackles discrimination and helps all children to reach their potential whatever their circumstances. Excellent community cohesion thoroughly embraces the school's diverse religious, cultural and social context. Children regularly learn about the wider world through visits, visitors and fund raising activities. The summer outing to the seaside is a great success in extending children's experiences. When they visit their families in different countries, they take a camera from school. One family who visited an orphanage in Tanzania shared their photographs with the children. These experiences often become part of children's imaginative play, such as dressing up in African clothes and carrying dolls on their back. Close liaison with parents and carers is central to the work of the school. Recently staff ran parenting courses, which were well attended. The courses also had a significant

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impact on bringing the local community together. Children and their families benefit greatly from the school's very close partnership with the adjacent day-care nursery. As well as sharing staff and resources, families greatly appreciate the combined care and support that both schools provide.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Just under a quarter of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Comments such as, 'The staff show great care and genuine concern for the children in their care,' is reflected in very positive responses from the parents and carers who offered an opinion. A very large majority of parents and carers who completed the questionnaires are very satisfied with the Nursery. They all agree that their children enjoy coming to school, feel safe and are well prepared for the future. A very small minority of parents and carers had some concerns about the progress their children were making. The children have only been in school for up to three weeks and no evidence was found during the inspection of their concerns.



## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at McMillan Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 24 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 94 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	16	67	8	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	14	58	10	42	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	14	58	8	33	2	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	54	9	38	2	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	63	9	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	54	10	42	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	58	9	38	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	9	38	13	54	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	42	11	46	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	38	14	58	1	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	38	14	58	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	9	38	15	63	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	13	54	10	42	1	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

**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.**



1 October 2010

Dear Children

**Inspection of McMillan Nursery School, Nelson, BB9 9AG**

Thank you all very much indeed for welcoming me to your school and showing me how busy you are having fun and really enjoying your learning. I found it hard to believe that some of you only started school a week ago. You all were being so sensible, helping one another and playing very well together, especially in Bob's Yard.

I agree with your parents and carers that your school is excellent. It is such a safe and happy place to be. There are so many exciting activities for you to get involved in, especially in the outdoor area. I was so pleased to see you all keeping fit and active and at the same time making sure that you play safely together, especially on the climbing wall.

All of the staff really take excellent care of you and plan exciting things for you to do. These activities help you to learn extremely well. Already most of you are listening well at story time and enjoying looking at books together. You are making excellent progress and having a lot of fun at the same time.

The headteacher and all of the staff are doing a wonderful job in the school. I have asked the governing body if they can help a bit more to check that the school continues to be outstanding.

I know you will all continue to enjoy every minute of your time at school. Always remember to keep trying hard. I wish you and your families all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sheila Mawer

Lead inspector

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