

# Stoneygate Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119083
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358489
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Geoffrey Yates

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>	96
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Tasnim Desai
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Julie Morrow
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	Stoneygate Walk Lennox Street, Preston Lancashire PR1 3XU
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed seven sessions and 10 members of staff who were working directly with the children. Inspectors spoke to parents, carers, children, members of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement plan, planning and assessment records as well as other documentation. They took into account the 72 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well children make progress especially in their personal and social education.
- How effective are the links made with the children's centre.
- How well resources are used to support children's learning.

## Information about the school

Stoneygate Nursery School is of a similar size to other nursery schools. A high proportion of children come from minority ethnic groups, including Asian and Eastern European families. An above average proportion of children speak English as an additional language. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with that in most other nurseries.

The Nursery is part of a children's centre that provides a range of services which support local families and their children. This provision is managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection. There is also on-site additional child-care provision that is not managed by the school which will also be subject to a separate 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

Stoneygate Nursery is an outstanding school that gives children an excellent start to their full-time education. Children are cared for exceedingly well by adults who ensure that every child is safe, fully included and each child's individual needs met. All groups of children make excellent progress because of the outstanding provision and high quality leadership and management. Excellent engagement with parents and carers resulting from the school being an integral part of the children's centre ensures a wide range of opportunities for parents and carers to develop their own knowledge and parenting skills and be involved in their children's learning. Parents and carers are highly delighted with all that the school provides, as reflected in the high percentage of positive responses to the parents' and carers' questionnaire and in the spoken comments made to inspectors. One child's father commented: 'the nursery school is just brilliant!' Children's behaviour is outstanding. Children work together extremely well and demonstrate a consistently high level of respect and concern for each other. They have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and of the importance of feeling safe. They are very proud of their school community and their involvement in it.

When they start in the nursery, children's skills and experiences are well below the levels expected for their age. The highly committed and experienced staff are extremely knowledgeable about each individual and finely tune learning opportunities to challenge and enable all children to succeed. Learning and progress are outstanding, as is the quality of teaching. Children in classrooms and in the outside area are wholly engrossed in what they are doing. As a result, by the time children leave the nursery their skills in each of the six areas of learning are in line with those expected and significantly higher in their personal and social development. The school's vibrant and exciting curriculum makes maximum use of available resources including the outstanding outdoor provision. However, opportunities are sometimes missed for children to use modern technology to support their learning. The well-balanced programme of adult-led and child-chosen activities is a major strength of the school.

Under the excellent leadership and management of the headteacher, well supported by her staff team, the school has left no stone unturned in bringing about further improvement. The governing body provides excellent support while resolutely holding the school to account. Rigorous self-evaluation at all levels is accurate and used effectively to target action plans for improvement. This means that the school has gone from strength to strength since the last inspection and clearly demonstrates that it has excellent capacity to improve further.

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

- Provide more opportunities for children to experience and use modern technology in order to enhance further the quality of their learning experiences.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

**1**

Enjoyment, enthusiasm and much excitement are evident indoors and out. Children's individual needs are catered for exceptionally well and their achievement is good. All children, including those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable and those new to learning English make outstanding progress. The vibrant and exciting outdoor area with its many well-organised areas is a superb place to learn and play. For example, children very well supported by an adult, acted out in costume the story of 'Billy Goat Gruff' in the outside stage area. In this session, learning was fun but very purposeful, being extended expertly by the teacher by ensuring children used and developed their speaking skills. The learning environment is very inviting and child-friendly. An activity that focused on looking for mini- beasts attracted lots of interest with children then using picture books to correctly identify a cinnamon moth, others drawing pictures or using the digital camera to take a photograph before letting the moth fly off. This was not a one-off event, with a bumblebee being the next centre of attention! Learning was excellent in another activity, this time using the sensory room; children, at a very early stage of learning English, began to learn the English names of colours by pressing buttons that changed all the items in the room to the same colour. Teamwork among the staff is exemplary and this contributes very significantly to the outstanding learning that takes place. By the end of their time in nursery, from a start well below that typical, children's attainment is as expected for their ages with children exceeding what is expected in their personal and social development as a result of the excellent attention given to this important aspect.

Children from different backgrounds get on extremely well. They quickly learn to share and take turns because adults promote the development of personal and social skills as excellent role models. Children's spiritual, moral and social development is catered for extremely well. There are plenty of local opportunities for celebrating the traditions and values of other cultures. Snack and meal times are excellent social occasions. Children are very aware of why they should eat healthily. Adults do not miss opportunities to promote basic language and number skills during these sessions. For example, children were asked to count out the number of plates needed for their particular group and then set the table. They looked at the roundly cut orange pieces and learned about circles and semi-circles. Children feel safe and know that there is always someone to comfort them if they feel sad. Despite effective procedures to encourage full attendance, it is average and has been affected by the illness of some children.

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*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>2</b>
Taking into account:	3
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?

Parents and carers are eager to express their delight at the provision and support for their children. The excellent indoor and outdoor curricular provision and high expectations of staff ensure that all groups of children make significant strides in their learning. Children learn remarkably well because the teaching is outstanding. Assessment procedures are used meticulously to measure progress and pinpoint children's attainment. Recent improvements have improved further the use made of the data. Clear evaluations of children's learning are at the heart of what the school does to identify the next steps in children's learning.

Teachers work highly effectively with teaching assistants to take responsibility for a wide range of exceptionally well-planned curricular activities. All adults use open-ended questions skillfully to encourage children to join in a full range of activities. They watch over children diligently when they are playing, for example, when they are outside, dancing in the garden area or story telling or music making in the gazebo. Staff rightly put a lot of emphasis on children choosing tasks for themselves indoors and outside and follow up their suggestions in choosing topics. There are also well-planned teacher directed focus group sessions to develop, amongst other things, early reading and numeracy skills. Resources overall promote and support all areas of learning very well.

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All children are fully integrated within an inclusive and racially harmonious environment. Staff take excellent care of them while they are in the nursery. This helps the children to settle happily and feel valued. Children who are vulnerable because of their circumstances are cared for extremely sensitively so that they learn to trust the adults around them. The additional expertise of staff from the children's centre is used to ensure that children's needs are met exceptionally well. Additional support from bi-lingual assistants benefits greatly the children who need it.

*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 headteacher's very strong vision for the future of the school and its role within the children's centre is shared and supported by all members of staff. The school has not stood still since the previous inspection when it was found to be outstanding. Since then, outcomes have improved further, assessment procedures have been made more effective, increased training for staff has taken place and there have been major improvements to the learning environment. These factors bear testament to leaders embedding ambition and to their commitment to moving the school forward.

The governing body carries out its duties exceedingly well and is rigorous in ensuring that children and staff are safe. It meets its statutory duties effectively. Safeguarding arrangements, including child protection procedures, are excellent. The governing body is highly supportive of the school and know its strengths. There are highly productive relationships with parents and carers, including producing their own newsletters. The school ensures that there are equal opportunities for all children and is rigorous in ensuring that discrimination is not tolerated. Links with parents and carers, the rest of the children's centre, pre-school providers and other educational establishments are excellent, resulting in additional experiences for children. For example, a link with a university project to develop children's physical skills has resulted in children experiencing worthwhile and exciting additional activities not normally found in a nursery school. Transition arrangements when children leave are managed well despite the challenge of children going to over thirty different primary schools. Community cohesion is promoted well. There are excellent local partnerships, and links are developing with a children's centre in a different locality. Plans are in place to widen children's understanding of national communities.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

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*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>1</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The large majority of parents and carers completed and returned the questionnaires. This is a higher rate of return than usual. Parents and carers, including those who spoke to the inspectors, are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work. All agree that they are happy with their child's experience and that their child feels completely safe and enjoys time in the nursery. Parents and carers judge that the school is led well, and that staff listen to what they have to say. Inspection findings match these views.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stoneygate 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 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 96 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	72	18	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	52	72	20	28	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	39	54	30	42	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	51	32	44	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	47	65	24	33	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	39	54	28	39	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	61	26	36	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)	36	50	32	44	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	57	29	40	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	53	30	42	0	0	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	53	33	46	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	63	27	38	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	74	19	26	0	0	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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.**



30 June 2011

Dear Children

**Inspection of Stoneygate Nursery School, Preston, PR1 3XU**

Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming when I visited your nursery. Thank you especially to those of you who talked to me and shared their work. It was wonderful to see some of the many exciting and interesting things you do, for example, sharing your excitement at looking closely at a bumble bee, before it flew into the air.

I found that Stoneygate is an outstanding nursery. This letter is to tell you some of the other things I found out. I hope your parents and carers enjoy reading it to you as much as I have enjoyed writing it!

You are all learning such a lot and are developing very well.

You told me how happy you are, how very safe you feel and how much you enjoy coming to school.

I could see that you are all looked after very well.

I was very impressed with your excellent behaviour.

You have lots of interesting things to do and a wonderful outdoor area to learn in.

You told me that you really enjoy all the activities you do at school.

You know all about keeping fit and healthy.

I have asked the adults to make sure that you are given more chances to use computers.

Yours sincerely,

Geoffrey Yates

Lead Inspector

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