

Newtown Nursery School

Newtown Street, Colne, Lancashire, BB8 0JF

Inspection dates 20 November 2012

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| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children achieve well and make good progress in all areas of learning.
- The school has a regular programme of checking the quality of teaching and this has contributed to improving teaching so that it is good. As a result most children leave well equipped to join Reception classes in other schools.
- Children cooperate well with teachers and teaching assistants who support their social and emotional skills well.
- All staff work closely together to provide a curriculum that meets children's interests and learning needs. Exciting activities are well chosen and children have many opportunities to explore the world around them.
- The headteacher's good leadership has helped the school improve. She is well supported by the senior teacher and the governing body and together they have tackled all the areas needing improving that were identified at the previous inspection.
- The school makes very good use of the classroom and the outdoor areas. Children thoroughly enjoy being outdoors where they can run around in the 'park', use ropes to scramble up the steep slope or travel on bikes before parking them in the numbered bays.
- Children enjoy learning and consequently they behave well. They settle into activities quickly and concentrate well on what they are doing.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Children do not have enough opportunities to practice letters and sounds during small group sessions.
- Adults' questioning of children is not always sharp enough to help improve their learning.
- Some children are not in school often enough to ensure that they are well prepared for moving on to the Reception year in a different school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed three teachers as well as five teaching assistants and visited six lessons.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, all teachers, the special educational needs coordinator, children and parents, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed children's work, shared their favourite books with them and talked with children about their different activities.
- A range of the school's documentation was examined, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, documents relating to monitoring and evaluation, systems for tracking pupils' progress, documents regarding the safeguarding of pupils and key policies.
- Inspectors analysed questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors took account of the 10 responses of the online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's most recent questionnaires for parents and eight staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Sue Sharkey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carol Machell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Newtown Nursery School is an average-sized nursery school.
- The school provides a choice of morning or afternoon sessions with the possibility of whole day care. Most children are part time and are admitted to the nursery following their third birthday.
- The school offers breakfast, lunch and after-school clubs.
- The vast majority of children are from White British heritage.
- No children are currently supported through school action. A few children are supported at school action plus but none have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school shares the site with an Early Years Centre for children from three months to three years. This is inspected separately and a report is available on the Ofsted website.
- The headteacher joined the school in April 2011 and the senior teacher in September 2012.
- The school holds the Investors in People Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding in order to improve children's progress further, by:
 - making sure that planning provides more opportunities for children to practise letters and sounds during lessons
 - ensuring that the questioning of children by teachers and teaching assistants during lessons is of a consistently high quality to extend their learning.
- Encourage regular attendance by the few children from families who consistently fail to make sure that their children attend and benefit from nursery provision, so that they are well prepared for their next school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enjoy the nursery and are enthusiastic about all the activities. For example they thoroughly enjoyed hunting through the 'park' searching for numbered bears making sure that they found them in the right order, while others were dressed ready to respond to a 'fire alert'.
- When children start the nursery their skills and knowledge are broadly in line with what is expected for children of this age but this can vary from year to year. Skills in numbers, calculations, speaking and listening, and their personal, social and emotional development can be lower.
- Children achieve well and by the time they move to their Reception classes they have made good progress. Staff provide support for the few children who are disabled and those with special educational needs as well as a few from minority ethnic groups to make sure that they also make good progress.
- Children settle quickly into routines. They are happy and show pleasure in being with their friends as well as the staff. Relationships between staff and children are good and staff manage behaviour skilfully so that children play cooperatively with each other.
- Nursery staff are constantly talking with children to develop their skills in speaking and listening. They question children about what they are finding and what they need to do next but these questions are not consistently of a high quality across all staff to extend children's learning and help them to explore new words.
- Good opportunities are given to help children to stick at tasks and to develop their independence. For example adults don't rush to help children put on outdoor clothing if the weather is wet and they can see that children are managing on their own.
- Staff are constantly giving support to help develop children's self-respect and social skills helping them to grow in confidence. They plan opportunities for children to work alone as well as in small and larger groups so that children become confident in speaking in groups as well as becoming sensitive to the needs of others.
- Children regularly make use of the attractive book corner. They handle books with care and thoroughly enjoy listening to stories. They remember stories well, quickly telling the adult reader what happens next. They already have favourite stories which they share with friends and adults indicating that they are keen and eager to learn to read. They are able to join in with familiar words and think about what happens next. Many children are ready to count numbers in books and most are keen to talk about the characters.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Good teaching, well organised indoor and outdoor learning environments and a varied range of activities help children to learn well. Adults demonstrate a secure understanding of how young children learn. Children are enthused and become absorbed in what they are doing. For example, a small group of boys were exploring the sensory 'tent' wearing high visibility jackets and carrying torches. The noises they made showed they enjoyed seeing how bright some colours were in the dark when there was light shining. Afterwards staff talked with the children about what they had seen and how they had felt.
- Staff ensure that sessions are well organised, effectively planned and well resourced. There is a good balance of activities that children organise themselves and those led by adults. However there are not enough opportunities for children to learn letters and sounds to help them with reading and writing.
- Children have plenty of opportunity to 'learn by doing' as well as finding out new things. They are very good at using recycled material, for example boxes were carefully chosen by two children who designed and made a bus and an aeroplane. They made sure that the tape used to stick the boxes was cut carefully and stuck down firmly. The management of both indoors

and outdoors is good and provides children with easy access to a wide range of equipment which they handle and use safely.

- Adults discuss and make detailed notes of how well different activities have gone and the learning that children have made. This information helps teachers and teaching assistants to check how well children are doing and to help to plan future activities.
- Teachers make sure that children know daily routines and what these are for. This helps them feel secure and behave well. As a result, children enjoy their time in school and they learn effectively contributing successfully to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Children make a good contribution to the life of the nursery and willingly help by taking on responsibilities for tidying up and putting things away. As a result they show an increasing level of confidence and independence so that they are ready to try out new activities, talk about their ideas and choose their own resources.
- Children's behaviour is good in the classroom and outdoors. They are polite to each other, confident to speak out in a group and sit quietly when needed.
- The school has no record of bullying. Staff talk with children regularly about the importance of other peoples' feelings and the children are aware of what the school expects from each of them. They know the importance of sharing and taking turns as well the fact that it is alright to be different.
- Adults give sensitive support so that children are willing to participate and try out new situations and experience unfamiliar activities. As a result they move confidently in different situations, particularly outdoors, aware of the importance to keep themselves and others safe.
- Attendance is average. There are a small number of families whose children do not attend school regularly, despite the nursery encouraging them to do so and this interrupts their children's learning.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders know the school well and, since the previous inspection, the school has improved. Since joining the school the headteacher has worked closely with the local authority. Effective support has been provided during this leadership change enabling improvements to leadership and management as well as teaching.
- Although recently appointed, the senior teacher has already made a positive difference to the curriculum and the way staff plan for their groups. The school recognises the importance of this to make sure that all children's needs and interests are well met.
- Staff and governors ensure that equal opportunities are promoted well. Information on children's progress is used effectively to check how well all children are doing and to make sure that all groups of children are making good progress.
- The school is extremely successful in the way it works with parents. The breakfast, lunch and after-school clubs are valued by parents and enjoyed by children.
- Leaders work closely with the Early Years Centre to support the needs of families and this helps enormously for those children who transfer to the nursery when they are three.
- Professional development is effective and is linked to staff performance management. Changes have been made to the way teachers work with teaching assistants. Teachers now have responsibilities for managing the classroom, the curriculum and the staff rather than working alongside teaching assistants in the classroom. These changes are still developing.
- The school has reviewed the curriculum so that it is flexible and allows for children's interests. It supports children's personal and social development well. Activities hold children's attention and encourage them to learn successfully, including those that particularly encourage early

reading, number and calculation skills. They excite children and expand their imagination promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body gives good support to all aspects of the nursery's work. Its role has developed since the previous inspection. Governors are now actively involved in checking the quality of teaching and children's learning. The governing body are well informed through close links with the headteacher and leaders. Members are involved in checking that the nursery is a safe place for children to learn and play and that all requirements for safeguarding are met.
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What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 119090 |
| Local authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 405829 |

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

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| Type of school | Nursery |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–4 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 83 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Angela Denton |
| Headteacher | Lyn Rider |
| Date of previous school inspection | 22 November 2010 |
| Telephone number | 01282 864411 |
| Fax number | 01282 864433 |
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