

Bradley Nursery School

Bradley Road East, Nelson, Lancashire, BB9 7QH

Inspection dates

27–28 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Achievement is outstanding. After starting school with very low skills for their age, children rapidly improve. Particularly strong improvements are made in personal and social skills and language and communication.
- Excellent teaching gives children the confidence to learn and develop positive attitudes to school. Children benefit from a wide range of very carefully thought out activities.
- A high quality range of books, construction equipment and play resources entice children to learn. Furniture, tailor made for children of this age, attracts their attention.
- The promotion of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This contributes to excellent behaviour and safety. Children from different backgrounds learn and play together well and almost never fall out.
- Parents are fully behind the school. Much is done to encourage their involvement in school life. Many parents, however, are not confident to come into school or help learning at home. This reduces the quality of education for some children.
- Exceptional leadership by the headteacher makes sure that the school is constantly developing. Supported by an experienced management team, the headteacher strives to give the best to the children and their families.
- The budget is spent shrewdly. The accommodation is cleverly adapted to support children's learning. The extremely well-planned outdoor area is a magnet for all. Both boys and girls thrive in its safe and highly stimulating environment.
- Indoors, the school is bright, spacious and secure. A number of rooms have been created for supporting groups of pupils, conducting confidential meetings and for the creation of an excellent library.
- The effectiveness of teaching is regularly checked and staff reviews carried out. This leads to very effective training. As a result, staff are up to date and morale is high.
- An accurate evaluation of how well the school is doing leads to the identification of the most important areas for the school's development. Given the current quality of leadership and teaching, the school is very well placed to continue to improve.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching indoors and outdoors on seven occasions. Discussions were conducted with the staff, three parents, and the Chair of the Governing Body. In addition, discussions were held with a representative of the local authority, the headteachers of two primary schools to which most children transfer, and with the extended schools liaison officer.
- In planning the inspection, and when forming judgements, reference was made to any comments placed by 10 parents on the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) together with recent questionnaires of parents' opinions conducted by the school. In addition, questionnaires from 10 staff were analysed.
- A range of school documentation was evaluated. These included the documents relating to safeguarding, the improvement plan, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance and records of children's attainment and progress.

Inspection team

David Byrne, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized nursery school. Most children join either in September or January of each year and stay for three, four or five terms.
- Children attend on a part-time basis of three hours a day either in the morning or in the afternoon.
- The large majority of children are of Asian Pakistani backgrounds. A high proportion speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of children with special educational needs is relatively high; many have difficulties with speaking and listening.
- The demolition of many homes in the community has caused some families to move out of the local area. This has reduced the numbers taking up a place at the school.
- The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Assurance scheme award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of parents involved in their children's education by extending the range of opportunities for parents to get involved in the education of their children in school and at home.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding.

- Children enter nursery with skills that are much lower than typical for their age. Many speak English as an additional language and struggle with speaking and listening. Most have a narrow experience of the wider world, and a high proportion have difficulties cooperating with others.
- Excellent teaching by the teaching team helps children to settle in quickly to school. As they become used to its routines, progress swiftly accelerates. Rapid and sustained progress occurs in all aspects of their development but particularly their personal and social development, communication and language and physical development.
- Data held by the school indicate that the proportion of children working at the levels expected for their age rises quickly; the gap with others nationally narrows quickly. Despite this sustained improvement, however, the attainment of most children at the end of nursery is below typical for their age.
- Aspects of the children's personal development are lower than typical which hinders learning in other areas. Some willingly play on their own, next to others but not with them. Some are nervous and shy, holding back from committing themselves. The experiences at nursery go a long way to overcome such reservations and most children become more confident and assured.
- Children benefit from skilfully designed activities that promote better speaking, develop a love of books and stories and raise their awareness of sounds and letters. During one story time, for example, children listened with riveted attention to the 'The Owl Babies'. All were immersed in the story so much that without realising it they talked and shared their opinions. Despite such enriching experiences, and the excellent progress they promote, many children have more to do to overcome their speech and language difficulties.
- Children who speak English as an additional language benefit from excellent support. They quickly gain in confidence. There is a rapid improvement in their knowledge of English and in their speaking and listening skills. Children with special educational needs also benefit from high quality support and progress quickly towards their individual targets.
- Much effort is placed on developing as far as possible the children physically. They access excellent outdoor facilities to promote their balance, muscular growth and control, for example of bikes and other tools. Indoors, they learn to cut with increasing accuracy, fit blocks together to make structures and use pens to have a go at mark making and at times writing sounds.
- From low starting points, children learn to recognise and count up to five and on occasion to 20. They develop a good basic understanding of shapes. Most make good gains in understanding the world around them and in creatively exploring it.

The quality of teaching is outstanding.

- Teaching is excellent. Excellent leadership by the headteacher has created a closely knit team dedicated to giving children the best possible start to school life. They are not afraid of trying new ideas and indeed, they embrace them fully if they are considered to be effective. By sharing their strengths and weaknesses, staff bring to children a wide range of skills and qualities. These combine to enable children to move rapidly towards the expectations for their age.
- Each child has their own personal contact person called their key worker, who keeps a close eye on the children's progress and achievements. Innovative use of video recording children helps to inform staff about the development and progress of each child. All information gathered is shared with colleagues and in this way, every member of staff understand exactly what each child needs.
- The teaching team believes that the best learning is achieved through play. Fine-tuned planning for all sessions enables children to do this but at the same time develops their skills of

making choices. Staff are highly skilled at spotting a child in need of support or who is ready to work at a higher level. Children are constantly encouraged to speak, respond to questions and test out their ideas. A great emphasis is given to enabling children to learn through exploration. The excellent presentation of resources throughout the nursery enables children to select what they are interested in and move from one activity to another.

- Recent staff training has led to increased expectations for children to become aware of sounds and letters (phonics). During a session using the imaginary creatures 'Beat Babies' children were agog as the teacher revealed how one had changed from brown to pink. Seizing their excitement, she proceeded to move onto some cards displaying sounds. With great enthusiasm, children matched some pictures drawn from a collection to initial sounds for example pen to 'p'.
- The skills of bilingual staff assist children who speak English as an additional language where required. All staff know how to help such children and do so very effectively. Children with special educational needs are given high quality support. Efficient methods for identifying the needs of such children, coupled with very detailed learning plans that involve parents as well, give the children every chance of doing well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding.

- Staff treat each child as an individual. All are treated equally regardless of ability, gender or background. A calm and safe atmosphere pervades all parts of the school.
- Parents are adamant that their children are safe and secure and enjoy school. This contributes to the excellent progress of children in their personal and social development. Children increase their capacity to work with others and share, but many find this difficult to do by the end of their time in the school.
- Staff are always there for the children. They take time to listen if they have the urge to talk. This makes the child feel valued. This approach, coupled with the extremely rich and stimulating choice of activities that capture the children's imaginations, contributes to their excellent behaviour. Aggressive behaviour or bullying of any sort is almost unheard of.
- The school strongly promotes an appreciation of the differing cultural backgrounds of children. Recently, everyone shared in the celebrations for Eid Mubarak and currently children are preparing for a Christmas concert to be presented to parents.
- Staff are aware, through contacts with the children's centre serving the community, of children joining nursery who may have behavioural difficulties. Staff work closely with professionals from education and health to give children high quality support.
- Visits to the locality, to understand where and how to cross the road, helps children to stay safe when out and about with their parents.
- Leaders have worked very closely with its school liaison officer to encourage regular attendance. It has improved steadily. At times, some children miss considerable time because of extended visits overseas taken for cultural reasons.

The leadership and management are outstanding.

- The headteacher offers exceptional leadership. Quietly, yet very skilfully, she instils in staff a sense of ambition and energy. Innovative approaches are encouraged as long as they improve significantly the life chances of the children.
- All staff are involved in evaluating the quality of teaching. The strengths and weaknesses of the school are understood by everyone. The information gathered feeds into identifying where training would be most helpful. This approach has kept staff on their toes and given scope for some teaching assistants to improve their professional skills and status.
- Parents are unanimous in their praise for the school. It does much to welcome parents to school. Staff are always available at the start and end of each session. Some parents join their

child during reading sessions and homework is encouraged through rhyme sacks. Despite these efforts, only a minority of parents get involved in the education of their children both in school and at home.

- The curriculum is very cleverly planned to match the needs of the children. It is designed to enable children to make choices but also to receive adult support where needed. Some children happily work on their own but often they prefer to work closely with an adult. Many children struggle with being independent. The school makes massive inroads in improving this but many children are unsure of how to work without support.
- In order to widen the children's narrow experiences of the world, much is done to bring in visitors to school and take children to new places. Recently, children visited a farm to meet its array of animals, an owl sanctuary has brought birds into school to meet the children and fire-fighters and police have been welcomed.
- The local authority gives good support to the school. It regularly provides an objective view of the school's performance and provides training courses for staff, for example in phonics.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Chair of the Governing Body is very supportive and has a very good understanding of the school and its community. Efforts are made to encourage governors to stay on the governing body for more than a year. Increasingly, members are willing to do this. Training keeps governors well informed. The performance of the headteacher is regularly reviewed. Governors are aware of the need to make sure staff merit their pay and regular reviews of their effectiveness do this successfully. All necessary steps are taken to keep the school safe and secure and to comply with safeguarding requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
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

Unique reference number	119078
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	401803

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	93
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Nike
Headteacher	Jackie Mitchell
Date of previous school inspection	February 2010
Telephone number	01282 615183
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