

Bram Longstaffe Nursery School

Farm Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA14 2RX

Inspection dates 22–23 January 2013

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.

- Children thrive during their time in the nursery school. Every child is known and valued as a unique individual. They are happy, confident and thoroughly enjoy their learning.
- The nursery is exceptionally well led by an inspirational headteacher. Her drive and determination to ensure that each child has the best possible start in their education underpins the continuing success of the nursery. Staff morale within the nursery is exceptionally high.
- Children achieve very well. Exceptional teaching by a highly skilled and dedicated staff team contributes significantly to the excellent progress that children make from their starting points.
- Children's progress is very well monitored by staff. As a result, the fun activities they plan are very well matched to the individual needs and interests of the children.
- Teachers have very high expectations of the children. Their nurturing and caring approach helps children settle very quickly and happily into the routines of the nursery.
- Children feel safe and standards of behaviour within the nursery are exemplary. Visitors to the nursery are made to feel very welcome.
- Parents are highly complementary about the quality of care and education their children receive. They are very keen to be involved in their children's learning although, as yet, a number of parents do not contribute to their children's learning journeys.
- Parents also agree that the school is very well led and managed and would have no hesitation in recommending the school to others. One parent commented that her child has come on 'in leaps and bounds' since starting at the nursery.
- The nursery is very well supported by the governing body. Its enthusiasm and dedication contributes significantly to its success.

Information about this inspection

- Over the two inspection days the inspector observed a varied range of nursery activities, including observations of children when they were involved in play opportunities that they had chosen themselves and when they were involved in small group sessions led by members of staff.
- The inspector spent time reading with individual children and discussing their 'learning journey' books. These are records of their achievements during their time at the nursery.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff members and parents. The inspector also met with three members of the governing body and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector reviewed information from four responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and also considered four questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspector also looked at a number of documents including the school development plan, documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour and safety and data on children's current progress. Attendance figures were also reviewed.

Inspection team

Sheila Iwaskow, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The nursery school provides 78 places and there are currently 69 children on roll.
- Most children are from White British backgrounds and English is their home language.
- The proportion of children supported at Early Years action and Early Years Action plus is below the national average. At the time of the inspection there were no children with a statement of special educational needs.
- The children's centre, which is managed by Action for Children, is located in the nursery school. The inspection report for the children's centre is available on the Ofsted website.
- Bram Longstaffe Neighbourhood Nursery is also located in the same building. It offers full and part-time places. Some children attend both the nursery school and the childcare provision. The inspection report for the childcare provision is available on the Ofsted website.
- Extended care at the beginning and end of the day is provided by Bram Longstaffe Neighbourhood Nursery.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enable a greater number of parents to take a more active part in their children's learning by encouraging more of them to contribute to their children's 'learning journeys'.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- When they start at the nursery children's skills are well below those typically expected for their age. By the time they leave the nursery their skills are much closer to expected levels for their age group. They have gained confidence and are very keen to learn.
- Staff place great emphasis on developing children's social, physical and literacy skills in readiness for starting primary school. Their dedication and innovative teaching ensures that children make rapid progress in relation to their abilities and starting points.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs make similarly very good progress. They achieve very well because of the high quality support that is put in place to help them succeed.
- Staff place great emphasis on encouraging children to do things for themselves. For example, when they arrive at the nursery they are encouraged to hang up their coat and find a card that has their name on it. At the end of a session children are very keen to help tidy up and they have no hesitation in sweeping up the sand that is on the floor and putting their toys away.
- Children relish the times that they spend outdoors. The outdoor play areas are particularly attractive, interesting and fun. Children laugh with delight as they run around in the fresh air, jump in puddles, make snowballs, dig in the mud and play games with their friends.
- Children enjoy learning to write. Staff plan fun activities that are of interest to both boys and girls. For example, boys enjoy making marks on the wall outside using paintbrushes and water, while girls enjoy practising their writing using whiteboards and beautifully brightly coloured felt-tip pens.
- Children thoroughly enjoy learning to read. They know how to handle books correctly and talk confidently about stories. They are aware that a story has a beginning, middle and end. Children have lots of fun dressing up as characters from books they have read and retelling the story in their own words. The school also has a library which the children and parents are actively encouraged to use.
- Children learn to count, recognise numbers and solve problems. As they play, staff take every opportunity to encourage the children to count, identify numbers and use mathematical language. Children have many wonderful opportunities to develop their problem solving skills and learn about the world around them. For example, while playing outdoors they laugh with delight as they fill plastic gloves with water and excitedly work out where to put the gloves so that the water will freeze.
- Parents told the inspector that their children achieve very well at the school and information from the online questionnaire (Parent View) also supports this view.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Staff are well qualified, have high expectations of the children and clearly understand how young children learn. Sessions are very well planned. Staff ensure that the activities they provide are fun and of interest to the children.
- Staff work exceptionally well with parents to settle new children into the nursery. Before starting staff visit children in their own home so they know a familiar face when they start. If a child is upset parents are actively encouraged to stay at the nursery until their child has settled.
- Parents agree that their children are taught very well and value the close relationships that both they and their child have developed with their child's key person. They also very much appreciate the help and support given by staff that helps them to increase their child's learning further at home.
- Staff monitor closely the progress that children are making. Learning journeys give a very clear account of children's progress across all areas of learning. This information is shared with

parents. However, some parents do not contribute to their child's learning journey which prevents them from being fully involved in their child's development.

- Staff take great care to ensure that the learning environment stimulates children's enthusiasm for learning. Displays are colourful and resources are within children's reach so that they can make independent choices.
- As children play staff use questioning expertly to push their learning on further. For example, while reading a book about animals the child was asked what animals she might see on a visit to the zoo.
- Close working relationships with other professionals, such as educational psychologists and speech and language therapists have been established to ensure excellent support for disabled children and those with special educational needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- All children are happy, confident and busy. They become completely engrossed in their play and, as a result, there are very few fallings out between children.
- Relationships between children and staff are very warm and caring. A child commented that she enjoyed coming to the nursery because she 'loved her teachers'.
- Children are kind, polite and considerate to each other. They sit happily at lunchtime and chat to each other, share toys and wait patiently to take their turn on the computer.
- Children are very aware of the standards of behaviour that are expected of them. They have a very good understanding for their age of what is right and what is wrong.
- Children feel very safe and everyone in the nursery is treated with great care and respect.
- Children arrive at the nursery on time and attend regularly.
- The nursery has established close links with a number of local primary schools. Reception teachers are invited into the nursery to meet the children who will be going to their school. Such good practice makes the transition from nursery to the Reception classes as smooth as possible.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is an inspirational leader and is very ably supported by her deputy and well-informed governors. Staff work very well together as a team. Responses to the Ofsted questionnaire show that staff have a high regard for the headteacher and are very proud to be working at the nursery.
- Secure systems are in place to check and monitor the quality of the teaching. There is also a very strong commitment to on-going training and professional development. This ensures that staff's skills are continually updated and improved. Teachers' pay is linked well to their performance in the classroom and the achievement of children.
- The headteacher has a very clear overview of the progress that children are making. Staff meet regularly with her to review targets; any underachievement is very quickly identified and additional support is quickly put in place if necessary.
- The school development plan is well thought out and sharply focused on building upon the current high standards of the nursery. The headteacher knows how well the nursery is doing and what needs to be done to raise aspirations even higher.
- Although pupils attending the nursery are mainly of White British heritage, teachers strive to ensure that they gain a good awareness of the diversity of the world in which they live. For example, cultural festivals are celebrated and languages from around the world are displayed. Such good practice effectively promotes equality of opportunity.
- The nursery has also developed very good links with the local community. Visitors, such as the fire fighter and police officer come into the nursery to help children understand how to keep

themselves safe. Other visitors, such as a musician and artist regularly come into the nursery to work with the children to develop their knowledge and skills.

- Children also enjoy visits to places of local interest such as the library, local supermarkets, French markets, animal parks and museums. Such positive experiences successfully promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
 - The local authority provides 'light touch' support to this outstanding nursery school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a very good knowledge of the school and are very supportive of the staff. The headteacher ensures that the governors are very well informed about the quality of teaching and the progress that all children are making. This ensures that governors are able to evaluate the work of the school competently. Governors are also actively involved in performance management for both the headteacher and her staff, ensuring that everyone is held to account for the progress that children are making. Additional and relevant training is undertaken by the governors which improves the way they are able to carry out their roles. Governors also ensure that safeguarding meets statutory requirements.
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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	112092
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	401234

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	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	78
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan McIntosh
Headteacher	Jacqueline Drake
Date of previous school inspection	27 April 2010
Telephone number	01229 814900
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