

Moorgate Nursery School and Children's Centre

Moorgate, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 4RY

Inspection dates

6–7 February 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 make excellent progress from their starting points because much of the teaching is outstanding.
- The school places a key emphasis upon children becoming confident, feeling good about themselves and being able to communicate, be active and relate well to others. As a result, children make an outstanding start in their education.
- All staff have an excellent knowledge of how children learn and use exemplary questioning to extend children's thinking. Teachers and teaching assistants are extremely skilled in getting to know each child so that teaching is relevant, meaningful and fascinating.
- Children love coming to nursery and their behaviour is outstanding. They benefit from excellent relationships with adults including their key person and they feel safe in school.
- The school is led exceptionally well by the headteacher. She keeps a very close focus upon the quality of teaching and achievement and leads by example. She ensures that she keeps herself and her team learning and constantly improving learning and teaching. As a result, the school has continued to improve since the previous inspection.
- Members of the governing body support the school well but do not fully know what is being done to reward good teachers.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning and teaching in three nursery sessions including an extended period outdoors and spoke to children. Some teaching was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with four members of the governing body, staff and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a number of documents, including school records of the quality of teaching, assessment data, children's files, self-evaluation and the school improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the 11 replies to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke informally to a number of parents.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school brings together early years education and care with support for families through sharing a building with a phase two children's centre (designated in May 2007) and an early years setting. The children's centre and early years setting were not part of this inspection.
- Moorgate is an average sized nursery school. It provides up to 80 places for children aged three to four years. Some staff and children are shared with the early years setting which provides extended provision for children from age two years.
- The proportion of children supported through school action is below average and the number supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Almost all children are White British.
- The nursery school has achieved a Leading Parent Partnership Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the good understanding that members of the governing body have of the school by ensuring that they know more about the link between teacher targets and pay.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children start nursery school with skills, knowledge and development that are below those expected of three-year-olds. From these starting points they make outstanding progress and achieve very well. Many are above the levels expected for their age by the time that they move on to primary school.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs make excellent progress. This is because their needs are identified very clearly and outstanding support is put in place to help them to do their best. All children respect differences and choose to play together. Staff ensure that learning opportunities and the school environment are accessible for all.
- Children make extremely good progress in all areas of learning because expectations are high, staff know children very well and individual progress is monitored carefully. Teachers and teaching assistants assess carefully how much children feel at ease, are spontaneous and free of emotional upset. Those who need the most support are identified and all children are supported very well. As a result, children become happy, relaxed, self-confident and self-assured.
- Parents recognise the positive impact that the school is having, for example, saying 'Children make a lot of progress when they attend this school' and, 'The excellent support starts with a home visit when they ask you about your child'.
- Children develop excellent communication skills; they are confident to speak to adults including visitors, they express themselves well through role play and use computers and the electronic whiteboard well. Opportunities to make meaningful marks and behave as a writer are promoted widely, including outdoors, where children during the inspection were confidently chalking on the floor.
- Early reading skills are taught well through access to an excellent range of fiction and non-fiction books and through story times and group times. Adults point to words when reading stories and use as many opportunities as possible to help children to explore the sounds that letters make.
- In 2011, data indicated that children's recognition of number was not good enough. Carefully focussed improvements to learning and teaching meant that in 2012 children's attainment in mathematics was much higher. During the inspection, children were seen accurately recognising and using numbers up to 17 to count.
- When starting at Moorgate, children have good physical development skills. Staff ensure that these become even better through extensive opportunities to learn outdoors and through the weekly visit to the local woodland for 'forest school' sessions. Staff expertise in using the outdoors is particularly skilled and children become very confident at climbing, balancing, cycling, pulling and carrying.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Much teaching is excellent. This is because all staff are well qualified, have high expectations of themselves and good access to training and research opportunities. More recently this has included some videoing of teaching to help staff learn how to improve. The school has also started to use the characteristics of effective learning from the Early Years Foundation Stage framework to help staff to evaluate the quality of teaching.
- When the planning and teaching are at their best the impact on children's progress is clear to see. For example, children made excellent progress in a mathematics activity with a teacher because she used a puppet very effectively to encourage the children to count some onions into a shopping basket. The activity showed how well children can achieve when teaching is creative.
- Staff give careful consideration to promote festivals such as Chinese new year and celebrations such as pancake day within their teaching. These activities support children's spiritual, moral,

social and cultural development well.

- More able children are taught well because all staff know children in detail and ensure that planning adapts activities to individual needs.
- The routine of the school day is planned effectively to make sure that children do not sit listening inactively for too long. Staff use large group and small group activities very successfully and also place a high value upon supporting children's own play and investigations without taking over and directing. As a result, children make outstanding progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants show high levels of expertise in observing what children are doing and judging when to get involved and extend what they are learning. Staff place great emphasis upon listening to children and talking sensitively with them. Consequently, children are helped to feel that their thoughts and ideas matter.
- As a result of very clear leadership of teaching from the senior teacher and headteacher, all staff use questioning very effectively to help children to think and find things out for themselves. Throughout the inspection it was not uncommon to hear staff asking children questions such as 'what do you think?' and 'what can we do?' Staff were also observed modelling being a thinker and using positive language such as, know, idea, find out and trying to do.
- The outdoors is used extremely well as a means for teaching. One teaching assistant observed with children, showed excellent modelling of investigation through talk and questions when discovering small creatures underneath logs. She then followed this with a clear and accurate explanation about insect homes. Her excellent support and language inspired children to go off on their own with magnifying glasses to find out more. Another teaching assistant explored paint mixing outdoors with children to such good effect that children came indoors thrilled and enthused with how the paint had covered all of their hands.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

- Many children need to learn about managing their feelings and behaviour when they start at Moorgate. Staff recognise that this affects children's ability to learn and progress. All adults work extensively to help children learn self-control, be confident and to understand school routines and expectations. As a result, children's behaviour is excellent.
- Children enjoy school, attend regularly and punctually. Absences or regular lateness are followed up very carefully with families. There are no recorded instances of bullying because children learn rapidly how to respect one another.
- Very clear routines and consistent support from staff, for example, in how to carry scissors, means that every effort is made to keep children safe. Children wash their hands regularly and take great care in tidying their classroom when needed. Members of the governing body take part in regular health and safety checks to ensure that the school is safe.
- Children benefit from an excellent key person system. This means that they have a special adult in school with whom to build a close relationship. Individual staff know their own group very well and lead on planning learning and teaching to meet the group's needs. Consequently, children become enthusiastic, confident, happy learners, at ease in their groups and with the wider school.

The leadership and management

are outstanding

- The school is led exceptionally well because the headteacher has a very clear vision for improving learning for children. She is very well informed and accurate in her thinking about teaching and achievement within the school. She monitors the quality of teaching very closely and leads practice by example, often working with and alongside staff.
- The headteacher is open and positive and seeks debate with others about children's learning and development and uses this to improve her own work and that of her team. She works very effectively to keep herself learning and to improve the learning of the staff she leads. The

governing body ensure that staff are supported to study for further qualifications. The impact of training is checked by the headteacher and members of governing body for the benefits it brings to the staff and the children.

- The headteacher uses findings from her observations to set very clear targets for improvement for teachers and teaching assistants. She makes excellent use of information from lesson observations, as well as data about children's progress, to decide whether teachers should be paid more.
- The local authority provides light touch support for the school. It recognises that the school is outstanding but provides regular challenge to the headteacher in order to help the school continue to improve.
- Partnership with parents is a strength of the school. Families are kept very well informed about children's progress each term. Children, staff, parents and carers are proud to be part of Moorgate.
- Safeguarding procedures meet requirements and the school ensures that visitors are carefully checked and aware of fire evacuation procedures.
- The school has tackled the recommendation made at the previous inspection to deepen staff understanding of the local area and improve how children learn about the wider world. As a result, the school works very well with the children's centre and provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning is good.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows what is happening in the school and asks challenging questions of the headteacher. The Chair of Governors is regularly at the school and she has made sure that members of the governing body are perceptive in their discussions about the value of spending decisions and the impact these have had on children's learning and progress. Although members of the governing body have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and achievement, they do not fully know what is being done to recognise and reward good teachers. Members of the governing body are supported well in their roles through regular training about safeguarding and other priorities and they ensure that safeguarding requirements are met.

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	119080
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	401805

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	57
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Davies
Headteacher	Jan Holmes
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2010
Telephone number	01695 573470
Fax number	Not Applicable
Email address	head@moorgate.lancs.sch.uk

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