

# Brunel Nursery School

Cambridge Street, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 1ES

**Inspection dates** 3–4 December 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Children thrive in the welcoming environment provided by all staff. This enables children to feel secure and contributes well to their good progress.
- All groups of children achieve well because teaching is good, activities are exciting and engaging, and relationships are positive and extremely supportive.
- Children who are disabled and those with special educational needs make outstanding progress because of the highly specialist support they receive.
- Excellent relationships with parents help to ensure that children settle quickly and develop confidence.
- Children's behaviour and respect for staff and each other is exemplary. They follow the well-established routines of nursery exceptionally well and show an excellent awareness of safety.
- The learning activities provided each day promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well.
- Senior leaders are focused on improvement. They use their accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development to drive forward improvements well. Governors are committed to the nursery and provide a good level of support and challenge to the headteacher and staff.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Staff do not consistently use the records of how well children learn well enough to plan further activities which fully challenge all children and, particularly the most-able, to achieve their best.
- Senior leaders do not regularly review the skills and progress teaching assistants make to support and extend children's learning.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight sessions led by teachers and teaching assistants. Two sessions were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior members of staff, a specialist language teacher, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). However, informal discussions took place with a small number of parents bringing their children to the nursery school.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's data on children's progress, the school's development plan, planning and monitoring documents, documents relating to safeguarding, and records relating to attendance.

## Inspection team

Clare Henderson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized nursery school which provides funded nursery education for children of three and four years of age.
- Children attend for either morning or afternoon sessions.
- The proportion of disabled children or those who have special educational needs supported through early years action is above average. The proportion of children supported through early years action plus is above average.
- The majority of children are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A high proportion of the children speak English as an additional language. A small minority are White British.
- The nursery is federated with the adjacent primary school and shares the same headteacher and governing body. The federated school was not the focus of this inspection.
- The headteacher joined the staff in September 2013.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching and children's achievement to outstanding by ensuring staff make enough use of the records of how well children learn to plan further activities which fully challenge all children and, particularly the most-able, to achieve the best they possibly can.
- Raise leadership and management to outstanding by ensuring senior leaders regularly review the skills and progress teaching assistants make to support and extend children's learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children join the nursery with a range of skills and experiences that are well below those expected for their age. Aspects of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy are very low for some children.
- All groups of children make at least good progress. By the time they leave nursery, the majority of children have skill levels, though still below those expected in reading, writing and mathematics, which are close to those expected for their age. This represents good progress and ensures children are well prepared for the Reception class.
- Children display good progress in developing early reading skills. They show a keen interest in stories. They choose books independently to look at and enthusiastically engage in story time, joining in repeated phrases and discussing what might happen next in the story. Children show growing confidence in recognising the initial letter sounds of their name.
- Children's number recognition and counting skills are developed well through rhymes and other activities. They are learning to recognise numbers to five and beyond and confidently identify shapes when carrying out shape finding activities in the mathematics activities provided. However, at times, activities are not sufficiently challenging for the most-able children.
- Children show good progress in developing confidence and concentration skills. Some children work with sustained concentration to wrap presents to go in for Santa's sack or to watch and identify the names of the birds who visit the outdoor environment.
- Children's physical skills are developed well through a broad range of activities. They enthusiastically use climbing equipment and run in the indoor and outdoor areas. They develop skills using arm and hand movements to manipulate play dough or to play 'the sticks' skilfully to music in a highly imaginative and enjoyable circle time.
- The skills of the most-able children are extended well when staff question them effectively to develop their learning, for instance when they had to think and explain why some animals would fit into the stable while others could not.
- However, children's achievement is not outstanding overall because this challenging work is not consistent for the most-able children in all areas of their learning. This is because staff do not always make enough use of records of children's learning to plan activities which fully challenge them to achieve their best.
- Children who are disabled and those with special educational needs make outstanding progress as they are supported extremely well by highly experienced and specialist staff. Staff work well with outside agencies and parents to make sure children's needs are fully met.
- Children from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are supported extremely well. Staff provide individual and bilingual specialist support to develop children's use and understanding of English. As a result, all children feel fully included and valued, and so grow in confidence.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Children are well motivated and engaged in their learning because staff provide a wide range of stimulating activities which are related to children's interests. As a result, they make good and for some children, outstanding progress in their time in the nursery.
- All staff establish very positive relationships with the children. They make very good use of praise and encouragement to promote children's self-esteem and confidence effectively.
- All adults engage well with children's self-chosen activities to promote learning. For instance, a group of children enthusiastically look at their learning journals with an adult, and remember and chat to each other about past trips and activities which they have enjoyed. The adult, through asking open questions such as, 'What were you doing in this picture?' developed

children's thinking skills and promoted language development well.

- Staff have a good knowledge of children's abilities and generally use this well to plan future activities and promote good progress. On occasion, the activities planned do not present enough challenge for the most-able children and so their learning is not developed to the full.
- Children's early reading skills are promoted well. Through good use of 'story time', teachers encourage a love and understanding of books and stories. Children's understanding of rhymes, songs and letter sounds is also developed well.
- Children develop their confidence well as they enthusiastically practice their Christmas concert. They sing tunefully and follow instructions carefully and every child is included as they work together to polish the performance which their parents will watch next week.
- Staff plan interesting activities to promote children's recognition and understanding of number and use chances to develop children's understanding of shape recognition, such as recognising triangles in circle time. However, these activities are not always sufficiently challenging for the most-able children.
- The indoor and outdoor learning environments make a positive contribution to children's learning and knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live. Outdoors, the spacious area provides a good chance for children to develop learning as they explore the trees, construction, music and climbing areas and make enthusiastic use of mark-making materials.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Children are highly engaged in tasks and activities and develop very positive attitudes to learning. They work well together to decorate the Christmas tree and to wrap Christmas presents to go into Santa's' sack. They happily play together and are particularly caring and ensure those children who are disabled and those who have additional needs are fully included in all the activities.
- Children respond well to staff's high expectations during session times and as they move between the indoor and the outdoor areas. They have a clear understanding of nursery routines and this helps them to feel secure.
- The key person works extremely well, where children relate to a particular staff member who oversees their progress and well-being. Each child forms a caring relationship with a member of staff and as a result, settles quickly and is secure within nursery.
- Children show consideration towards each other and cooperate extremely well during their play. In the role play of being in Santa's house, for instance, they enthusiastically play together showing concern and kindness for each other's needs.
- Staff are vigilant in promoting children's knowledge about safety by talking with them at every opportunity, for example about how to use scissors or the climbing apparatus. As a result, children show a very well-developed awareness of safety in both indoor and outdoor areas.
- When speaking to the inspector, all parents reflected their full agreement that the school keeps their children safe.
- Staff manage children's behaviour extremely well. The golden cushion reward is highly valued by the children. One child is chosen in each session to sit on the cushion as a reward for their excellent attitudes and behaviour.
- Children's level of attendance is good, and this reflects the school's positive efforts to stress the importance of regular attendance to parents and children.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Leadership of the headteacher and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader is good and they are supported well by staff. There is a shared commitment to providing the best possible start for children which is strongly focused on improvement. Improvements to facilities within the school building and to the range of resources available, for example, have advanced children's learning

well since the last inspection.

- Teamwork is good and staff work well together; they are happy, settled and positive about the school. They work as a successful team and they think carefully about what could be done to improve the school for children. The development plan contains specific targets and outlines ways to meet them effectively.
- There is a clear system in place to manage teachers' performance. Staff are set targets to improve which link to the school's overall plan for improvement. However, although the school plans to review the skills and progress teaching assistants make to support and extend children's learning, these have not been fully implemented.
- The activities planned, in all the areas of learning, promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. Celebrations of the different cultures and religious beliefs of the children and their families are highly valued and enjoyed by all the children. This creates an extremely harmonious community in which equal opportunities are promoted and discrimination is tackled well.
- Leaders create a positive, purposeful environment for learning and are welcoming and inclusive. The highly effective special educational needs leader ensures that children who are disabled and those with special educational needs are very well supported by specialist staff.
- The local authority knows that this is a good school and has provided positive support to the headteacher since his appointment.
- The nursery works in close partnership with the federated school. The children regularly attend Reception class assemblies. This ensures they are well prepared when they move to the Reception class.
- Parents are highly appreciative of the nursery. They praise the commitment and warm approachability of staff and comment on the good progress their children make while at the nursery.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors provide a good level of support and challenge to the school and regularly visit the nursery to see how well children are learning. They ensure that decisions are made only after full consultation to ensure that any changes are in the best interests of children's well-being and learning. An example of this was when the school federated with the adjacent primary school.
  - The governing body has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors are fully involved in development planning and work well with the senior leaders to drive improvements forward. They use data effectively to challenge the school about children's progress, the quality of teaching and finances. They help to ensure that pay for teachers matches performance. However, they have not fully checked senior leaders review the skills and progress teaching assistants make to support and extend children's learning. Safeguarding and child protection procedures fully meet statutory requirements and members of the governing body carry out regular checks to make sure that children are kept safe.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119092
<b>Local authority</b>	Blackburn with Darwen
<b>Inspection number</b>	426061

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	56
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Canon Andrew Raynes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Julian Rogers
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 November 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01254 291250
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