

# Longshaw Nursery School

Crosby Road, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB2 3NF

**Inspection dates** 30 April–1 May 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 make good progress and achieve well. Key workers record children's learning carefully and celebrate their achievements with parents. Staff have high expectations of each individual child.
- The school provides well-focused support for children who speak English as an additional language, the most able children, disabled children and those who have special educational needs and as a result, these groups all achieve well.
- Teaching is usually good and excellent use is made of the indoor and outdoor classrooms to help children think, investigate and explore.
- Staff make it clear to children that they expect them to act thoughtfully and safely. As a result, children feel safe, are kept safe and their behaviour is good.
- The acting headteacher provides good leadership and knows the school well. She is very well supported by staff and the governing body. Together they are committed to doing the very best for the children. This has helped to contribute toward the rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and children's achievement seen this year in the nursery.
- School leaders make sure that staff have regular access to training and learn from one another through good teamwork and peer support.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching, and questioning does not always require children to think hard or to explain their ideas.
- The nursery school website does not provide a useful range of up-to-date information for parents.
- Despite the school's cooperation with parents, a minority of children still do not come to school as often as they should.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed a varied range of nursery activities, including small group sessions led by teachers and support staff, children involved in play opportunities they had chosen themselves and read a book with a child. The inspector conducted one joint lesson observation with the acting headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, staff, members of the governing body, two local authority representatives and the headteacher from a local infant school. The inspector also spoke to children and to parents when they dropped their children off at the nursery.
- The inspector reviewed 12 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and a letter from a parent. Seven staff questionnaires were also considered.
- A range of documents were examined by the inspector, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, the school development plan, information about children's progress, checks on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspector scrutinised children's 'learning journeys'. These are records of their achievements during their time at the nursery school. Attendance figures were also considered.

## Inspection team

Louise Murphy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized nursery school. It is staffed by two teachers and four teaching assistants.
- The nursery school provides 80 part-time places for children in morning and afternoon sessions.
- Children are predominately from a White British heritage and a few are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. There are growing numbers of children joining the nursery from an Eastern European heritage and who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of children supported at early years action is above the national average and the proportion of children supported at early years action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- Longshaw Nursery is integrated with Longshaw Childcare Centre. Some staff and children from Childcare spend time in the Nursery. The childcare setting is subject to a separate inspection and the latest report can be viewed on the Ofsted website at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).
- A joint leadership team leads the two organisations as one integrated centre for children.
- A phase one children's centre also shared the site at the time of the previous inspection but this has since been de-designated.
- The nursery has close links with a neighbouring infant school.
- Since the previous inspection the acting headteacher has returned from a period of extended leave and a full-time class teacher has been appointed.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to raise children's achievement even more by developing adults' questioning skills so that they regularly ask questions that encourage children to think harder and share their ideas.
- Improve behaviour and safety by working even more closely with parents to raise the level of children's attendance at nursery school.
- Improve the impact of school leaders by developing the school website so that it provides more information for parents.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start the nursery with skills and knowledge lower than those typically expected for their age. They benefit from good teaching that is carefully planned to meet their needs; this helps children to make good progress from their individual starting points. Children leave the nursery with a range of skills and knowledge much closer to the expected levels for their age group and ready for the next stage of their learning.
- Since the previous inspection the way staff plan the daily activities has improved. They carefully assess the children's level of development and plan activities that they know children will find interesting. This helps to maintain children's curiosity so that they persevere with tasks and achieve equally well in all aspects of their learning.
- Achievement in reading is good. This is because children are encouraged to share books in the reading area and during small group key worker sessions, when they enthusiastically join in with repeated phrases. Children also learn how to match letters with the sound that they make. For example, they learn the sound that 'y' makes, they practise the sound, identify items that start with 'y' and then try to find things that begin with 'y' throughout the day. This provides a firm basis to help children apply their skills to sounding out words as they get older.
- Children get off to a successful start with their writing. They are encouraged to practise writing and there are many examples of how mark-making skills are improving, both on displays around the school and in children's individual learning journeys. A few children were eager to demonstrate how they could write their own name, and many took advantage of the range of resources available to encourage mark making.
- Achievement in mathematics is good; children are provided with a range of opportunities to practise their number skills in both the inside and outside classrooms. Children will happily count numbers of objects that they see around them. For example, one child was reading a book about farm animals and he enthusiastically counted five ducklings and three piglets.
- The school provides regular small-group sessions that are closely matched to children's understanding. As a result, the most able children make good progress.
- Children who speak English as an additional language make good progress. This is partly due to the support of a bilingual student who works in the school twice each week. She supports children to talk together in their home language and helps them to practise their English. Bilingual parents also work closely with the school and talk to children and read and explain stories to help children to develop their confidence.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs make good progress because their needs are quickly identified and effective support from staff and external agencies is put promptly into place. This confirms the school's determination to make sure that all children are given the same opportunities to succeed.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and there are some examples of high-quality practice. All parents who responded to the online questionnaire or spoke to the inspector said that their child is taught well.
- Teachers and skilled early years practitioners form an effective staff team who work very well together. They consistently demonstrate how important it is to be friendly and caring and encourage children to chat together as they play. This helps them to enjoy working and playing together and develops speaking and listening skills very well.
- Activities inside and out are imaginative and motivate children so that they want to get involved, investigate and explore. Resources are well used and the regular use of information and communication technology (ICT) helps children with their learning. For example, children confidently take photographs of their own work to include in their learning journeys or display on

the wall. This helps them to feel deservedly proud of their achievements.

- Mathematical concepts are well developed. For example, during the inspection children enjoyed identifying shapes and counting the number of sides and corners that different shapes have. Children are regularly encouraged to look for numbers in the environment. For example, the numbers that they saw on road signs are displayed on the nursery walls together with photographs of children paying for items and receiving change during a visit to the local shop.
- Staff make sure that all children in their key worker group are given the opportunity to join in with discussions and respond to the questions that they ask. However, not all questioning is of the same high quality and so does not always extend children's learning or help them to explore and express their new ideas.
- All staff make an excellent contribution to children's learning journeys which give a detailed account of the good progress that each child makes and what they need to learn next.

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

- The behaviour of children is good.
- School records show that there are no records of bullying or racism. Behaviour has improved impressively since the last inspection and all children take turns, cooperate and play together very well.
- Children know that when they complete a piece of work they place it carefully in a particular box. They take pride in the work that they complete and help with tidying up at the end of the session. All of these things help to maintain a tidy, pleasant classroom for children to enjoy.
- When children are particularly kind they are rewarded with a 'kind hearts' medallion. A further honour which is valued by the children is the 'helpful hands award'. Both of these help children to understand the behaviour that is expected at Longshaw Nursery.
- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is good.
- Children feel safe and are kept safe by adults who care for them very well. Opportunities to learn about safe behaviours are included in a range of activities. For example, children pushed tyres up the hill to develop strength and coordination and then rolled them down the hill, checking carefully that no one would be hurt by the tyre.
- Arrangements for starting at the school are excellent. Children benefit from a staggered start to nursery life. They meet with their key worker and then visit school with their parents before staying for a short period by themselves. Children are well prepared before they stay for the full session.
- When they leave, most children attend Longshaw Infant School. Children are introduced to their 'buddy', a child from the current Reception class who will help when the nursery child transfers to the infant school. Reception class teachers visit the nursery to meet the children who also have the opportunity to visit their new school. However, they are already familiar with the school as they regularly do physical education (PE) there. All of these routines help the children to move confidently on to the next stage in their education.
- The school checks children's attendance to see if there are any patterns to absence. They work closely with parents to help them understand the importance of children being in nursery for every session. However, not all parents respond as positively to the school's requests to improve attendance.

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

- The speed with which the acting headteacher has put actions into place to improve children's achievement, the quality of teaching and the standard of behaviour, shows that she has the skill and expertise to continue to drive improvements even further.
- The acting headteacher is very well supported by the governing body, teachers, other practitioners and the manager from Childcare, who is also a member of the effective joint

leadership team. Since her return to school, staff morale is very high and staff questionnaires show that staff are proud to be working at the nursery.

- The nursery's evaluation of how well it is doing is accurate because it is based on detailed and regular examination of the work that it does. Targets set for teachers are closely linked to the planning documents and both are focused on improving standards.
- The acting headteacher regularly checks the quality of teaching and learning. She is often joined by headteachers from other nurseries and local authority staff who all agree that the quality of teaching is good. Staff are supported by an effective programme of training and observe each other teach, so that staff can learn from each other.
- The whole curriculum is well planned. Opportunities to celebrate occasions important to other cultures represented at the nursery and to collect money for charities, such as the British Heart Foundation, all help to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Parents appreciate the level of communication that they receive from the school. Staff are available daily to keep them informed about their child. What is more, the school sends a newsletter home every week which is informative and provides tips to parents on how to develop their children's learning. However, the nursery website is not detailed enough and does not provide enough up-to-date information to parents about what goes on at the school or how they can support their children's learning.
- The local authority has worked very closely with the school since the previous inspection. A good level of support has contributed to improved standards, particularly in the development of a new progress tracking system. Moreover, the authority has encouraged the inclusion of the nursery in an effective networking group that includes other nurseries from both within and beyond the authority.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are well informed about the work of the school and are very supportive of staff. They have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for development. The acting headteacher makes sure that governors are very well informed about the progress of all groups of children in the nursery. Governors attend regular training, enabling them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities. They know about the quality of teaching and that teachers' pay must be linked to how effective they are. Statutory safeguarding duties meet requirements and the budget is prudently managed.

## 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>	119084
<b>Local authority</b>	Blackburn with Darwen
<b>Inspection number</b>	442389

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery School
<b>School category</b>	Nursery School
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	80
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sean Rogers
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Allen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 November 2012
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