

Stoneygate Nursery School

Stoneygate Walk, Lennox Street, Preston, Lancashire, PR1 3XU

Inspection dates 15–16 July 2014

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------|
| 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.

- The headteacher's dedication and ambitious leadership have ensured that the high quality of teaching and children's achievement has been sustained since the previous inspection.
- Senior leaders and staff share the headteacher's commitment to excellence and this is shown in all that they do to promote children's excellent learning.
- The school continues to improve and adapt its practice to ensure that it is highly effective in meeting children's learning needs. Systems to track and assess children's progress have been further refined. The school shares this information with the schools that children transfer to but not always fully enough to ensure a shared understanding of children's skill levels.
- High-quality teaching ensures that children learn in an exciting, well-resourced environment, where staff have an in-depth knowledge of their individual needs and interests. As a result, children make rapid progress in learning.
- Highly positive partnerships with parents mean that parents are well informed and supported to help their children's learning.
- The nursery provides an inclusive, nurturing environment in which children feel secure and thrive.
- Children have a highly developed awareness of safety. They behave extremely well and their behaviour is expertly managed by staff.
- Governors provide very effective support and challenge to the school and are fully involved in its drive for excellence.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven sessions or part sessions, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, six other governors, the leadership team and other staff, a representative from the local authority and a local headteacher. Telephone meetings were held with reception class teachers from two local schools.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's information on children's current progress, planning and checks on the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.
- There were insufficient responses to the online Parent View survey for them to be taken into account. However, the inspector spoke to several parents and carers when they brought their children to school and took account of both the school's most recent questionnaire to parents and the 16 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Elaine White, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized nursery school. Children attend part time, for morning or afternoon sessions, or for two-and-a-half days per week.
- A high proportion of children come from minority ethnic groups. They are mainly of Asian heritage or Eastern European origin.
- Around 80% of children attending speak English as an additional language. Most are at the early stages of learning English when they join the nursery.
- The proportion of children who have special educational needs supported at early action is below average. The proportion of children supported at early action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school shares its site with Stoneygate Children’s Centre and Pebbles at Stoneygate Day Nursery. These provisions are inspected separately and reports of their quality can be found on the website www.ofsted.gov.uk.
- In 2012, the school and the children’s centre became federated with Appletree Nursery School and Children’s Centre, led by one headteacher. Each school has its own governing body coordinated by an overarching collaboration committee formed of members from both governing bodies. The headteacher divides her time equally between the different centres and nurseries. The deputy head of centre takes on day-to-day responsibility for leading Stoneygate when the headteacher is elsewhere.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further enhance the close working with the main schools to which children transfer by more thoroughly sharing information about children’s skill levels on leaving the nursery school to ensure a common understanding of children’s skills and abilities.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children make exceptional progress from their starting points, which are well below those typical for their age. By the time they leave the nursery, their skills are usually in line with those typical for their age.
- Children make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and, as a result, are well prepared for the next stage of learning at school. Children learn to be confident and independent learners.
- The broad range of books is very well used by children to develop early reading skills. Children show a keen interest in books and stories, joining in repeated phrases and showing knowledge of the sounds that letters make.
- Children for whom English is an additional language are very well supported by staff who speak their home language. They help children to understand instructions clearly and to learn to speak English more fluently.
- Children with special educational needs make extremely good progress due to the high level of support given by staff and close liaison with other agencies to ensure that their needs are very well met.
- The most able children's learning is extended as they enjoy, for example, writing labels on a picture they have painted of a plant or, in a game outdoors, working out how many more mats they will need to ensure all children have one.
- Children rapidly develop confidence in counting skills. They enthusiastically count as they are engrossed in their play, for example, counting cakes they have made in playdough. They show a growing understanding of simple subtraction as they sing number rhymes and decide how many teddies are left when one is removed from sitting on the wall.
- Children's physical skills are extremely well developed as they make enthusiastic use of the broad range of outdoor equipment. Children are very active in their learning outdoors and confidently climb, balance, run, and develop skills through ball games.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Outstanding teaching over time ensures that children make rapid progress. Staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn; they know the children extremely well and pay a high level of attention to making sure that activities are well matched to children's needs and interests.
- Staff keep an extremely close check on the progress each child makes to make sure that all children learn exceptionally well. Where it is identified that children need extra support to extend their personal, social and emotional development or language skills, this is put in place to ensure excellent progress.
- Staff establish highly positive relationships with children. Children feel valued, encouraged and included and, as a result, are happy and confident as they take part in activities and ask questions of staff. A question about a staff member's first aid kit led to a discussion about wounds, infection and then about doctors, which developed children's understanding and increased their vocabulary.
- The exciting outdoor learning environment has a positive impact on children's involvement in their learning and their rapid progress. Children develop curiosity and an understanding of the natural world as they excitedly look for minibeasts and plant seeds. They develop problem-solving skills as they explore making toy cars run down pieces of plastic piping, and enjoy mark making on the large outdoor blackboard, using paintbrushes and water.
- Staff are highly skilled at involving themselves in the activities that children choose for themselves, to develop and extend their learning. Children who had found a snail in the outdoor area observed it closely using a magnifier linked to a whiteboard screen. Children learnt new

words as they described the snail and were encouraged to think how they might find out how many eyes the snail has by using a non-fiction book.

- Staff make sure that skills are taught through questioning children skilfully while working with them individually and in small groups. For example, children were supported very well to write a list of what they would like for Eid. As a result some children concentrated for long periods of time on this task.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of children is outstanding. Children are extremely well motivated and engaged in their learning and this makes a positive contribution to their rapid progress.
- Children have harmonious relationships with each other and show a very good ability to cooperate. They work together to 'paint' an outdoor building using water and paintbrushes, and cooperate to build a 'castle' using play bricks.
- Staff set high expectations for children's behaviour and they manage it extremely well. The behaviour of children identified as needing support shows rapid improvement over time.
- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is outstanding.
- High-quality policies and procedures are in place to ensure children's safety and there are no recorded incidents of bullying or racist behaviour.
- Attendance is good for most children and has improved recently due to the school's efforts to encourage regular attendance.
- Children feel very secure in nursery and show an extremely well-developed awareness of how to keep themselves safe. They confidently climb on low-level branches in the outdoor area and negotiate any obstacles safely.
- Staff are vigilant to ensure children's safety. The school ensures that parents have a good level of information about keeping children safe by, for example, including information about e-safety in its newsletter.
- Parents report that the school keeps their children safe.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher provides exceptional leadership. Her strong drive for excellence in all of the nursery's work is shared by senior leaders, governors and staff alike. As a result the nursery is continually seeking ways to further improve the already high-quality provision.
- Changes to the leadership structure since the school became federated with Appletree Nursery have been extremely well managed to ensure that new senior leaders and those developing middle leadership roles are well qualified and trained. As a result leaders have worked highly effectively to sustain the high-quality teaching and learning.
- The school has a highly accurate view of its performance. The school development plan, shared with staff and governors, is clearly set out to ensure that key areas for development are tackled effectively so that the school continues to improve and the high quality of provision is sustained.
- Leaders continue to refine systems to ensure that children's progress is thoroughly tracked, including the progress of different groups to make sure that all are making similar rapid progress.
- All staff have their performance regularly assessed and targets are set to ensure that high standards are maintained. Staff appreciate the support they get and also the opportunities to develop and improve their practice.
- The school works to share excellence in practice with the nursery school it is federated with. It also works closely with local primary schools to offer nurture group sessions to children needing support in developing the necessary skills to be ready for school.
- The school works extremely well with the large number of local primary schools to which children transfer, to make sure that children are familiar with their new schools and are well

prepared for the transfer. Information about children's skill levels is effectively shared with Reception class staff. However, the school does not always develop this information sharing further to ensure a common understanding of children's skill levels.

- The school promotes equality of opportunity extremely well. All children are highly valued and included, and children from different backgrounds and cultures learn harmoniously together. This has a highly positive impact on children's confidence and on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school works highly successfully with parents and carers. Parents have a high level of confidence in the school. They are delighted with their children's progress and the level of communication with the school. Staff who speak more than one language help to ensure that there is positive communication with parents who speak English as an additional language.
- The local authority recognises the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, and has supported the school in maintaining the high quality of teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly ambitious for the school. They know the school very well and make sure that they are fully informed about children's achievement so that they can hold leaders to account. They provide a high level of support and ask searching questions to challenge school leaders. Governors fully understand the quality of teaching and the link between pay and performance. They manage finances efficiently, making sure that money is spent wisely to support children. For example, they have recently funded a Polish speaking teaching assistant in order to meet the needs of the growing number of Polish speaking children attending the school. They ensure that children and staff are kept safe through effective safeguarding procedures and regular safety checks.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 119083 |
| Local authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 439937 |

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

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| Type of school | Nursery |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 3–5 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 95 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Sumyya Ismail |
| Headteacher | Julie Morrow |
| Date of previous school inspection | 28 June 2011 |
| Telephone number | 01772 257865 |
| Fax number | 01772 257865 |
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