

Hindpool Nursery School

Bath Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA14 5TS

Inspection dates 21–22 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Exceptional leadership from the head teacher, along with all staff, has ensured that the school has maintained high standards of teaching and achievement.
- All groups of children, including disabled children and those with special educational needs, make at least good and often outstanding progress.
- Relationships between staff and children are excellent. As a consequence children thoroughly enjoy the nursery and love attending.
- Teaching is outstanding because staff know the children very well as individuals. Creative and imaginative teaching promotes high quality learning throughout the nursery.
- Nursery staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn best. Activities excite children, and their independence is encouraged, enabling them to look after themselves and make decisions about which activities they take part in.
- Children are consistently polite and friendly towards each other, working and playing well together.
- Children feel safe and well looked after and show exemplary behaviour. They arrive at school eager to learn and concentrate fully on any tasks they are engaged in.
- The nursery is highly valued by parents who are delighted with all that is on offer for their children.
- Partnerships with parents are exceptionally strong. This helps children to settle quickly and enjoy thoroughly each day with their friends.
- The headteacher, staff and governors are united in their desire to continually improve the nursery so that the needs of all children are met.
- Although staff support each other well, the school has not yet fully developed the process of teachers and leaders learning from each other, in school or in other nurseries in the area, in order to further extend children's learning.
- Governors are very supportive of the school. They are regular visitors, are well informed and know the work of the school extremely well.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed two teachers, two senior teaching assistants and one teaching assistant during eight lessons which included a joint lesson observation with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, children, parents, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at children’s learning journals, work on display and talked with children about their different activities.
- A range of the school’s documentation was observed including plans for improvement, safeguarding arrangements, a record of the school’s observation of teaching and systems for tracking pupils’ progress.
- The inspector took account of responses to the school’s most recent questionnaire for parents alongside 20 responses from the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors analysed 10 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Sue Sharkey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hindpool Nursery School provides part-time nursery education for 42 three and four-year-old children who are admitted to the nursery the term after their third birthday.
- The nursery also makes separate provision for 26 two to three year old children. This is subject to a separate inspection.
- All pupils are of White British heritage.
- Five percent of children who are disabled and have special educational needs are supported by Early Years action and seven percent are supported at Early Years action plus. Five percent have statements of special educational needs.
- The school is a member of the Cumbria Nursery Schools' network and is a lead school for the Cumbria Early Years hub.
- The nursery school shares part of its building with a children's centre. This is not managed by the school and is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop further the strategy of leaders and teachers learning from each other's practice both across the school and with other nurseries in the area in order to continue to support and extend children's learning.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has consistently high aspirations for the school. She is extremely well supported by the assistant headteacher and all staff whose high expectations have ensured that outstanding achievement and teaching at the previous inspection has been maintained.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Staff share the headteacher's vision and passion to continually improve. The expertise and close teamwork of staff are a significant strength of the school. Staff have the confidence to explore new ideas so that the school meets the needs of all children, whatever their abilities or circumstances.
- The leadership of teaching is outstanding. The headteacher ensures that high-quality teaching is achieved through an effective system of managing teachers' performance as well as their professional development. Senior leaders use their checks on teaching to ensure that teacher's pay is linked to the quality of teaching as well as children's achievement.
- Staff training is linked closely to the school's development plan. For example when leaders recognised that there had been a slight dip in children's achievement in mathematics, whole school training was put in place quickly. This resulted in the school making changes to mathematics teaching which had a very positive impact on children's achievement.
- The school has strong links with other nurseries in the town as well as across the county. Opportunities are taken to support each other as well as train together. The school has started looking at teachers and leaders working together within the school, and with other nurseries, but could take this further in order to continue extending children's learning.
- The school has an excellent relationship with parents and all parents who responded to Parent View say the school is well led and managed. This strong partnership enables parents to be very successfully involved in their children's learning. All of the many parents spoken to were very enthusiastic in their praise and support of the school.
- The local authority has confidence in the school's strong leadership and provides a light touch support.
- The curriculum is vibrant, lively and enhanced by excellent opportunities for small trips such as to the fire station, library and local shops, including pet shops. Indoor and outdoor learning are valued equally. There is an excellent balance of activities and experiences through the day. For example, when outdoors, children can quietly watch the activities of birds through 'spy holes', enjoy the experience of running around in the wind with a friend or rise to the challenge of being timed whilst completing a running circuit which includes jumping into tyres whilst counting them. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development threads successfully through all activities.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Improvements since the previous inspection have resulted in changes in the way the governing body checks different areas of the school's work. Governors bring a wealth of expertise and experience to the school and access training whenever possible to benefit the work of the nursery. They frequently visit to talk with staff, children and parents which ensures that they are knowledgeable and have a very clear understanding of how well the nursery is doing. They share the passion of the headteacher and staff to ensure that there is continuous improvement. The governing body manages the school's finances effectively and ensures that it knows what effect budget decisions have on contributing to improvements in children's learning. They work closely with the headteacher to ensure that pay scales and progress reflect staff skills and abilities. Governors ensure that safeguarding requirements are thoroughly met.

The behaviour and safety of children are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of children is outstanding. Children thoroughly enjoy all that is offered to them; as a result they are fully occupied, happy and content from the moment they arrive at school.
- They show high levels of enthusiasm and are very willing to 'have-a-go', take turns or wait patiently until it is their turn. They learn to play together extremely well and share resources and space.
- Children are polite and have very good manners. They are extremely respectful to each other, staff and visitors.
- Children have excellent attitudes to learning. They concentrate exceptionally well and stay on activities until they are completed successfully whether these are activities led by an adult or initiated by the

children themselves.

- Children have a high level of independence. For example they remember to wash hands before eating their snack and manage to put coats on for themselves.
- Children attend school regularly. They are very keen to start as soon as they arrive with smiling faces and are instantly welcomed by staff. Children know the routines so they become involved quickly in an activity, for example, using glue and glitter to create a picture. One child handled a glue stick very carefully while she concentrated on making sure both glue and glitter went exactly where she wanted them to go on the paper. Another child was immediately enticed into enjoying a jigsaw. He handled each piece carefully, exploring the shapes while making sure that the right pieces fitted together to make the picture.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The calm and purposeful atmosphere is a result of excellent relationships and the right level of challenge for children. Children say they feel safe in school and that adults help them to feel safe. Parents also are completely satisfied that their children are safe in nursery.
- Children learn how to judge what is safe for them having learnt about safety in their work and play both outdoors and indoors. They understand how to be safe when taking risks.
- Children learn how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. This was demonstrated by the way they play with each other outdoors or move around the space inside. The curriculum reinforces safety as do visits and visitors, for example, from the local police and firefighters.
- Governors are fully conversant with the importance of safe management of staff and buildings.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching is excellent because all adults in school work as a team. All staff have a clear understanding of children's individual needs. They have high expectations of what children can achieve. As a result children thrive because teachers and teaching assistants identify children's skills that need developing and the activities that encourage and excite them.
- Staff work very closely together to ensure that there is always a relaxed atmosphere in the school where children feel welcome, cared for and can enjoy friendships.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are aware of the additional needs of any children including those who have special educational needs. Staff work closely with families as well as with other agencies involved. They work diligently as a team so everyone is aware of the extra needs of children. Children's learning is presented in small steps so that they develop confidence and enjoy success frequently.
- Adults ensure that children have easy access to books and that they quickly gain an understanding of the importance and fun of reading. During story time children were already excited before the story started. They were absorbed by the book as the teacher created suspense often before turning the page or lifting a flap. Well-timed questioning ensured the development of children's listening as well as their speaking skills. Children have many opportunities to look at and share books which they enjoy thoroughly.
- Staff plan together and there are on-going checks on children's progress which are recorded rigorously. These assessments are used effectively to ensure that the work planned is challenging for all groups of pupils.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are highly skilled at asking questions to find out what children know in order to extend their learning. During a mathematics lessons children were looking at different shapes. The teacher drew very large shapes in chalk on the floor which stimulated children into talking and asking questions. The side of the shapes were counted which led to other discussions about the length of the sides before naming the shapes. The teacher introduced a semi-circle, extending the discussion as children realised that the shape was the same as half a moon. Not only were the children learning new shapes but further skilled questioning led the children to discovering that two semi-circles make a circle.
- Staff build close relationships with parents and exchange information and ideas about children's learning and how their children can be supported. Staff assess children's progress regularly and thoroughly, and use photographs and text to record findings. The records of children's progress and the clearly identified next steps they need to take are impressive and are shared with parents regularly.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Most children start in the nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding which are weak. Some aspects

of communication and personal, social and emotional skills as well as reading, writing and mathematics are particularly low.

- Children learn rapidly, making at least good and often outstanding progress from their starting points so that when they leave the nursery most are well prepared for learning in the Reception year at their next school.
- The needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational need are identified very quickly. They are extremely well supported in one-to-one or in very small groups but staff do not take over so that children quickly grow in confidence and self-esteem. As a result these children make rapid progress in their learning.
- More able children are identified and challenged to acquire higher skills and understanding. They make outstanding progress because staff have high expectations and carefully build on what these children already know to extend their learning.
- Early writing skills are highly valued and opportunities to write are at hand throughout the nursery both indoors and outdoors. As a result, children make very good progress in developing these skills and in the manipulation and control of pencils and pens.
- Children thoroughly enjoy looking at books and listening to stories, sometimes joining in with the words or actions to those they have heard before. This contributes successfully towards children's early reading skills being developed rapidly.
- Children quickly develop very good listening skills because teachers or teaching assistants make story time exciting ensuring that children develop a real love of learning as well as a love of books. They are able to talk confidently about what the cover of a book tells them about the story. For example children can recognise the title on the front of books and are aware that illustrations depict the characters in the story. Appropriate questioning ensures children's language and speaking skills are further developed successfully as well as children learning the importance of taking turns as they answer.
- Mathematical skills develop rapidly. Children use a good range of resources to develop counting skills and adults take every opportunity to involve children in using numbers and shapes. For example, following registration children counted how many were present. The teacher asked if there were five children but children quickly replied that there were eight. This activity continued with children counting beyond 10 whilst the teacher shared the written numbers. Children then enjoyed using sponges and paint to print these numbers. Throughout children were engrossed, eager to join in and happy learners. All parents who responded to Parent View agree that their children are happy in school.
- Children's independence is constantly encouraged and they are able to take care of their personal care and hygiene needs. Easy access to resources means they can effortlessly choose their own activities.
- The outdoor and indoor areas provide excellent opportunities for children to extend their social, physical and imaginative skills as well as their understanding of the world. For example children develop the social skills to work cooperatively and deepen their understanding of the needs of others. They learn to persevere with tasks and make decisions for themselves.

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	112093
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	448104

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	2–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Penfold
Headteacher	Jackie Mutton
Date of previous school inspection	19 October 2011
Telephone number	01229 833120
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