

Turncroft Nursery School

Highfield Road, Darwen, Lancashire, BB3 2DN

Inspection dates 19–20 November 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.

- Children's outcomes are transformed at this exceptional school. They flourish and make rapid progress in their early learning.
- The achievement of the most able children and those with special educational needs is outstanding. Whatever their starting points are, each child is challenged and supported to achieve their potential.
- Staff are very knowledgeable about early years best practice and share the headteacher's passion for inspiring children to enjoy learning.
- Each child's progress is carefully monitored although their next steps in learning are sometimes not checked to see whether children have achieved them.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the education their children receive at this school. Many of them say that their child does not like weekends because they cannot go to school.
- Parents have helped the school to ensure that children's attendance is very regular.
- Children take part in the many activities indoors and out with gusto. Their early reading, writing and mathematical knowledge is advanced in almost everything they do. Their very well-developed speech and language and mathematical knowledge reflects this.
- The behaviour and safety of children are outstanding. They blossom because they are clearly respected and valued as unique individuals.
- The vibrant curriculum is successful in making sure that children have a wide knowledge of the world around them. It makes an excellent contribution to children's social, moral, cultural and spiritual development.
- Inspirational leadership for children's care and achievement is firmly focused and very effective.
- Leaders and governors have not ceased their commitment to further improve on the outstanding outcomes of the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector and headteacher observed a wide range of sessions and reviewed children's 'learning journey' folders over the two days of the inspection.
- Discussions were held with governors, representatives from the local authority, members of staff, parents, grand-parents, neighbours and children.
- The inspector reviewed the responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, letters from parents and the conversations with parents at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions. The findings of the 10 responses to the staff questionnaire were also taken into account.
- The inspector looked at a variety of documents including, information about children's progress, children's work, records of governing body meetings, the school's view about its effectiveness and records relating to children's safety.

Inspection team

Marie Cordey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized nursery school. Children attend part-time, mainly at a morning or afternoon session.
- The nursery provides 'wrap-around' care before and after school and for children to attend all day instead of for only the morning or afternoon session. This provision was not part of the inspection and reports for this can be found on the Ofsted website.
- The majority of children are from white British backgrounds. A small proportion of children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a small number of children speak English as a second language.
- The proportion of children who are disabled or those who have special educational needs is average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Check to see that the next steps identified in the marking of children's work have been achieved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher wants only the best for the children at Turncroft and this sets the tone for the school. She is very well supported by a senior teacher, key workers and support staff who all share her ambitions for the children. They continue to build on the significant strengths from previous inspections because they are not complacent. They know their school exceptionally well. The headteacher has helped other schools to improve, using the position of being the leader of an outstanding school.
- The quality of teaching is regularly and rigorously checked. It is closely matched with children's progress and directly linked to their outcomes. Any areas for improvement are quickly identified and result in tailored training and support to continually improve provision. Staff are held to account for the achievement of children as well as the quality of their teaching before they move to the next salary level.
- Record keeping and regular marking make a significant difference in improving children's work. Sometimes, however, the next steps for improvement highlighted by staff are not routinely checked to see whether these improvements have been made. Children still make outstanding progress because of the outstanding quality of teaching over time.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted extremely well and all groups of children make outstanding achievement in their learning. The rich curriculum concentrates on children gaining the basic skills in literacy and numeracy as a foundation for learning throughout their lives. Children learn that gaining knowledge and developing their interests are joyful. They are very well-prepared for life in modern Britain because they are taught to respect and celebrate each other and people from a range of different backgrounds. Children have a keen sense of what is right and wrong.
- Children often say that they 'are thinking', because they are taught to persevere and to try to work things out. Their manners are exemplary; they welcome visitors using their full names, open doors for people and are very proud to take on 'jobs' around school whether it is giving out the materials for an activity or being in charge of tidying up, for example. They like the shapes and colours in paintings by Kandinsky and enjoy working with artists in school and listening to authors read to them. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is, consequently, very well promoted.
- The local authority has provided light support because of the outstanding judgement at the previous inspection. This support has been rigorous and helpful combining specialist early years' support from the local authority as well as from the 'school alliance' including the regular support from a headteacher of a 'teaching' school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is committed to continuous school improvement and typically question the school's performance. Governors manage finances astutely, especially given some unexpected expenses regarding surplus staffing. Their financial judgements are clearly based on what will make a difference to children's learning and their personal development. Governors take their responsibilities for safety of the building and safeguarding children seriously and safety arrangements meet requirements. Governors scrutinise the performance of staff in order to decide whether they teach well enough to secure children's substantial progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of children is outstanding. They become more self-reliant and confident because they enjoy what they are doing and thoroughly enjoy their learning. They are willing to share and 'take turns' because they are encouraged to treat others the way they would like to be treated themselves.
- Their behaviour is managed very well by staff, mainly by having high expectations of children's attitudes and courtesy. On the rare occasion when a child is not willing to share, for example, staff talk to them quietly about kindness and 'being fair' and children quickly respond positively.
- Children are aware of bullying and people who might not 'be very nice' and they know who to turn to if they are concerned. Mostly, this is to key workers who are very involved with both the children and their families.
- Children's attendance at this age is not a statutory requirement but determined work to improve children's attendance since the previous inspection has been very effective. Over 95% of children have 100% attendance and parents have engaged fully with the school to make this improvement.

Safety

- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is outstanding. Children say they feel safe and their parents fully endorse this in questionnaires and in discussions. Governors regularly inspect the building to ensure that it is safe and, for example, raised the height of the boundary fence to make the grounds more private. The governing body undertakes regular safeguarding training and ensures that staff training is regular and thorough.
- Children take acceptable risks in their play, for example, while hunting for leaves, pine cones and twigs to make collages. They use the climbing equipment without fear because there is always someone nearby and because their physical skills have been well developed.
- Children are aware of what they need to do if they trip up or fall over although, for the most part, they pick themselves up and carry on with whatever they are doing. Children know who to turn to however, if they hurt themselves and they know that help is at hand.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The outstanding quality of teaching is based on staff knowing each child as an individual, excellent knowledge of early years' education and high expectations of children's capabilities. As a result, children thrive in activities matched to their interests and skills whether that is balancing, weighing and measuring indoors in a science activity or rescuing a superhero outdoors; in this case, the TC (Turncroft) bear.
- Because the needs of each child are taken into account when planning activities and in guiding children, they make outstanding progress. This includes groups of children such as the most able, those at an early stage of learning English and those who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- The planning of activities is done by a team of staff including teacher, key workers and nursery assistants. The interests of children are taken into account. The themes of 'superheroes' and the environment were chosen because of the high numbers of children who were interested in 'superheroes' and those who were so captivated by the outdoor environment that it prompted a whole series of activities, such as compost making, art work, foraging in the soil and studying insect life.
- While taking part in any activity the children are encouraged to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Children were seen estimating the weight and texture of soil while digging and then mark making to record their experiences. In particular, staff act on the headteacher's passion for improving children's mathematical education. Children count, take away numbers and add them even when this is not a staff directed activity because they are so enthusiastic and because they see it as relevant to many of their activities.
- The most able children are challenged to achieve their potential because they are stimulated by carefully planned activities to 'stretch' them further, children move forward quickly in their learning.
- Parents are aware of how well their children are doing through their child's 'learning journey', by continuing some activities at home and by regular meetings with staff. Parents believe that their children are making good progress at this school and that teaching is of good quality. Their most common description in conversation and in letters to the inspector was 'amazing' and 'excellent'. This report supports parents' views.

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children join the nursery with skills that vary widely from child to child but overall there are many whose skills in all areas of learning are weak. By the time children leave nursery their skills are at least at the level whereby they can make a good start in the Reception Year and many have gone beyond this and are beginning to learn the kind of work they would cover during the reception year in primary school.
- Children make the most progress in their personal and physical development, their speech and language and in their mathematical knowledge and skills. Leaders focus on these as a priority because these affect their life-long learning as well as contributing to children's grasp of other aspects, such as understanding of the world and science for instance.
- The school's focus on children's personal development and the curriculum, that is exceptionally well taught, develops in children a joy of learning, self-reliance and perseverance and a wide knowledge of a range of subjects. In addition, an emphasis on early reading, writing and mathematics equips children well in their learning and prepares them very well for primary school.
- Speaking and listening skills are the foundation for much future learning. Children learn how important it is to listen carefully and can be heard asking others to 'hush' so that everybody can hear what is being

said. Their vocabulary increases because of the school's concentration on children extending their use of more and more specialist vocabulary. Children talk about the books they are reading, often in rhyme because staff emphasise rhythm through words and music to entertain and make learning more memorable.

- Children who are disabled and those with special educational needs are supported primarily through outstanding teaching and, when appropriate, through one-to-one work or small group support by specialist, knowledgeable staff. The school is prepared to support children in many different circumstances and so, for example, they will write letters to a child's family in the child's first language as much as possible. This reflects their commitment to the achievement of children who speak English as an additional language and to their outstanding progress in line with that of the other children.
- The most able children are challenged to take part in work that will realise their potential. Consequently, their reading, writing and mathematical achievement is high as they read more and more difficult words, write in paragraphs and begin to complete sums.

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	119099
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	448109

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	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	89
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Celia Rushton
Headteacher	Elizabeth Shears
Date of previous school inspection	22 November 2011
Telephone number	01254 701534
Fax number	01254 701660
Email address	Turncroft.nursery@blackburn.gov.uk

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