

Duke Street Nursery School

Duke Street, Chorley, PR7 3DU

Inspection dates 3–4 December 2014

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| 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.

- Underpinning the school's success is the inspirational leadership of the headteacher, who alongside very capable staff and governors are determined to provide the very best education for the children of this school.
- Duke Street Nursery is a special place to learn where every child and family are welcomed and valued.
- All groups of children make outstanding progress. Many children are able to read simple words and write their name by the time they leave nursery.
- Teaching is outstanding. Staff know every child extremely well and planning for learning is based on a very secure understanding of each child's interest and their needs.
- A rich exciting curriculum provides many opportunities to develop children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills.
- Staff establish kind, caring relationships with children resulting in them feeling completely safe.
- Staff have very high expectations of children. Time is spent establishing routines and supporting children in following them. As a result, children's behaviour is outstanding as is their personal, social and emotional development.
- The indoor and outside environments are highly appealing to children and support all areas of development extremely well.
- Excellent partnership working means the expertise within this nursery is shared widely.
- Parents are full of praise for the school and think it is a wonderful place to learn. They are happy their children are receiving the best possible preparation for their next stage of education.
- Governance is strong and provide good support and challenge. Although some governors know the school extremely well the new governors have not yet had the time or training in checking for themselves the accuracy of school self-evaluation.
- All staff are skilled and reflective professionals. They are keen to improve their skills further through the sharing of expertise and of attending relevant training.
- Leaders including governors have maintained the high-quality teaching, achievement and other outstanding features highlighted at the previous inspection because they are not complacent and share a clear direction for continuing improvement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in a wide range of sessions, both indoors and out, including those led by adults and those where children chose activities for themselves. Most of these observations were carried out with the headteacher.
- The inspector analysed the responses of the 10 staff who completed the Ofsted questionnaire, took account of the 51 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and the responses to the school's own parental questionnaires.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, staff, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector talked to children about their learning and reviewed samples of the work in Learning Journeys and on display around the school.
- A range of documentation, including the school's own data on the progress of different groups of children, school improvement planning, monitoring of teaching and learning and staff appraisal, minutes of the meetings of the governing body, and records and policies relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance were also analysed.

Inspection team

Lois Furness, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a broadly average-sized nursery school. It provides places for 80 full-time equivalent three- and four-year-old children. Children are admitted after their third birthday and usually attend either five morning sessions or five afternoon sessions each week during term time. However, a flexible option is offered where parents can choose the sessions that they wish their child to attend. Children stay in Nursery for three or five terms until transferring to the Reception class of one of the many local primary schools.
- Before and after school services and a lunch club are offered through the Dragonflies club so children can stay from 8am - 5.30pm if required. Provision for 16 two year-old children is also offered by Dragonflies. Also on the campus is a children's centre that offers a range of extended services through other agencies such as health professionals, speech and language specialists and family support workers. The children's centre and Dragonflies are inspected separately and the inspection reports can be found on www.ofsted.gov.uk. All of these provisions including the Nursery school have the same headteacher and governing body.
- Revisions to the governing body means that approximately half of them are new to their role as governors.
- Almost all children are of White British heritage. There are a few children in the early stages of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of children who are disabled or have special educational needs is approximately 10 per cent, which is lower than average. Most of these children have speech and language difficulties.
- As this is a nursery school it does not receive pupil premium funding or sports premium funding from the government.
- The school is used regularly by the local authority to share good practice across the early years sector. The headteacher has been recently commissioned by the local authority to support a new headteacher of a local nursery school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen governance even further by providing time and training for new governors so that they can confidently confirm for themselves the evaluations made by school leaders.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The highly inspirational headteacher, very ably assisted by the senior teacher and all staff, has successfully maintained the high quality education seen at the time of the last inspection. This is because everyone working in the school share the same passion and determination to focus on meeting the needs of every child and their family. The very strong commitment to promoting equality and preventing discrimination is clearly shown by the fact that all groups of children make outstanding progress over time.
- Accurate self-evaluation ensures that the school is consistently improving all aspects of provision. Rigorous systems are in place to check children's progress and resulting information is used most effectively by staff to plan next steps of learning. This means achievement is outstanding and progress information shows how effectively staff have successfully narrowed the gap in progress between disadvantaged children and others, and boys and girls.
- The special educational needs co-ordinator is a highly skilled practitioner who effectively ensures outstanding support for children who are disabled or who have special educational needs. This continual checking of all aspects of provision has been instrumental in the school retaining its outstanding status for the fourth time.
- Senior leaders check rigorously on the performance of staff so that any training needed by individuals is provided for quickly. Staff morale is high because staff know they are valued, appreciated and supported. They welcome the opportunities for additional training and already well qualified, are encouraged to achieve further qualifications such as Early Years Professional status.
- The curriculum is extremely well structured. Initially, time is spent teaching children routines, developing language, physical skills and how to respect each other and resources. As a result, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding as children learn to work alongside each other as part of a community. As children develop, the curriculum broadens and they have access to exciting and varied learning opportunities both indoors and outside. Many opportunities are provided for children to practise outside what they have learnt indoors, for example using sweeping brushes and coloured water to write their names or the new letter and sound they have learnt.
- Staff effectively ensure that children have exciting opportunities to celebrate their own and other cultures, particularly those represented by children in school, in order to become effective citizens in Britain and globally. The celebration of Polish National Day for example, provided the chance for children to learn about Polish culture and taste Polish food.
- The school has excellent links with parents as shown by the high number of them who responded to the online questionnaire Parent View. Of the 51 parents who responded, all would recommend this school to others. The school website provides parents with useful and relevant information and projects such as 'Readiness to Learn' have provided parents with an excellent insight into how to support learning at home.
- The school works extremely well with a range of partners both locally and from further afield. The headteacher is proud of how the school is used to promote good practice across the early years sector. As part of this, staff regularly support students from a range of higher education institutions. There are also very good links with speech and language therapists who provide valuable advice and the links with the Children's Centre ensure families are exceptionally well supported.
- The local authority knows the school well, providing useful support and challenge, which governors and staff welcome.
- Safeguarding meets all current requirements. All policies and procedures to keep children safe and to protect those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are securely in place and regularly reviewed to ensure they remain effective.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are very proud of their school and the more experienced governors know it well. They know of the quality of teaching and the strengths such as how the gap between boys' and girls' progress is narrowing. All ask challenging questions but approximately half of governors are new, and as yet have not had the time or training necessary to enable them to fully contribute to school evaluation. For example, by visiting classrooms to confirm the accuracy of what leaders tell them.
- Governors have recently carried out a skills audit to make sure the new governors have skills that complement those of existing governors.
- Finances are managed efficiently, and the use of resources is effective. Governors make sure that leaders check the performance of staff thoroughly and know that agreed targets must be met before any financial reward is given.
- Governors fully appreciate their responsibilities and are very careful to ensure that all statutory requirements including those of safeguarding are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of children is outstanding. When children start Nursery they are taught carefully what is expected of them. As a result, day to day routines like washing hands before food or tidying up after activities are very quickly and effectively managed.
- The children are confident and work well independently because they are respected and encouraged to believe in themselves and to respect others. They have a strong sense of right and wrong, take turns and share resources very willingly. No disruptive behaviour was observed during the inspection and children respond immediately to staff's instructions.
- Children thoroughly enjoy themselves in the nursery and children's laughter can be heard throughout the day. They have very positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is managed very successfully by staff that model good behaviour and who constantly remind children of the school's high expectations.
- Children and their parents are encouraged to take attendance seriously even though it is not statutory for this age group. As it is, children want to come to school and the absences that do occur are mainly through illness. Their punctuality is excellent because they are eager to learn. This enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning, combined with high levels of independence, helps children to move confidently into their next stage of education.

Safety

- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is outstanding. Parents overwhelmingly agree with this and are very confident about leaving their children in school as shown by their very positive response to the on-line Parent View questionnaire. They are sure that there are no incidents of bullying or of name calling and school documentation confirms this.
- Relationships are excellent and children relate well with, and trust, all members of staff. They have key workers and often have a very close relationship with their special person. They know who to turn to if they need help. This very caring and nurturing ethos allows all children to thrive and flourish.
- The governing body, staff and site-supervisory staff make regular and frequent safety checks of the school and the grounds. Staff and governors undertake all necessary safeguarding training.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- All practitioners have an excellent understanding of how young children learn and know the children exceptionally well. Through consistent use of praise they expertly foster skills of curiosity and exploration, encouraging children to have a go. This constant praise contributes strongly to children's high self-esteem.
- Staff observe children carefully, noting what they can do and what interests them. These notes are then

used to plan a range of activities that will engage their interest whilst ensuring outstanding progress. Detailed planning and accurate observations of learning contribute to the success of this school, as staff constantly review and reshape tasks on a daily basis.

- The teaching of reading is a strength as children learn letters and sounds and then progress to looking for these letters in books. One child was thrilled when recognising the letters of his name in a book he was learning to read. Communication including writing and mathematics is taught outstandingly well as seen by the rapid progress children make in these areas of learning.
- A strength of the teaching is the focused time that staff provide for individual children, particularly for disadvantaged children or those who have additional needs such as speech and language difficulties. This enables staff to move on children's learning rapidly. Adults model language extremely well and every opportunity is taken to introduce new vocabulary. The 'Chattering Chimps' sessions are very effective in enabling those children at the early stages of learning English to quickly become fluent. Daily nurture sessions for targeted children help them to improve rapidly their personal, social and emotional skills.
- Children's Learning Journals reflect the extensive range of activities they have experienced during their time in nursery, and the annotations reflect the outstanding progress they have made. These clearly show the skills the children have mastered and the fun they have had in this very special place.
- Outstanding relationships and excellent attitudes to learning prepare pupils well for their next stage of learning in the primary school. A highly positive learning environment is reflected in the high quality of displays around the school, such the three dimensional Autumn Masterpiece.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children, including those with barriers to their learning, make exceptional progress. Overall their starting points are typical for their age but approximately one fifth of children have difficulties in communication and language and in personal social and emotional development. Children learn rapidly and staff have successfully sustained the outstanding achievement seen at the last inspection.
- Children are very well prepared for primary school, not just because of their breadth of knowledge and their high literacy and numeracy skills but because they are so ready and eager to learn. Their social skills are very well-developed and they are enthusiastic learners who are keen to talk about their work. Children make excellent progress in their physical skills through dance, exercises and playing outdoors. Children use information technology such as I pads very confidently.
- Children make excellent progress in their early reading and writing skills. Some children can sort objects beginning with the same initial sound, and many can identify letter sounds in their names and other words. Children enjoy stories and books and readily share books with an adult or one another. They enjoy repetitive rhymes and singing. Children make marks with water, paint and foam. Some are able to draw letter shapes and write their name.
- Children enjoy counting, and some children already count accurately to five and beyond. They enjoy using a wide range of resources, such as blocks to match numbers. They can record how many blocks are in a tower. They know the names of different shapes such as square, triangle and circle and recognise that a box of T bags is made up of squares and rectangles and a ball of string is round like a circle.
- Children who are disabled or who have special educational needs are carefully and effectively supported by knowledgeable staff in a range of ways such as one-to-one support or small group work. As a result their achievement is outstanding, as is that of those children at the early stages of learning English.
- The most able children are encouraged to complete increasingly challenging work. As a result these children make the same exceptional progress as other children and demonstrate a secure understanding and knowledge of all areas of learning.

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 | 119066 |
| Local authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 448107 |

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 | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–5 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 65 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Carol Hefferan |
| Headteacher | Susan Conron |
| Date of previous school inspection | 9 May 2012 |
| Telephone number | 01257 262430 |
| Fax number | Not applicable |
| Email address | bursar@dukestreet-nur.lancs.sch.uk |

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