

Longshaw Nursery School

Crosby Road, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 3NF

Inspection dates

26–27 February 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The executive headteacher, senior leaders and members of the interim executive board (IEB) have swiftly brought stability back to the leadership and management of the school.
- The IEB is very quickly moving towards becoming the constituted governing body of the school. No one can question the dedication and commitment of its members. They have supported the school well through some challenging times.
- Current staff work closely as a team and morale is high.
- All groups of children, including those who are disadvantaged and with special educational needs and /or disabilities (SEND), make strong gains in their learning. This is the result of good-quality teaching across the school.
- Although non-statutory, attendance rates have improved dramatically since the last inspection. This reflects children's enjoyment of attending the school.
- Virtually all parents and carers are very supportive of the school's work. Typical comments include, 'Since the new headteacher took over, the changes I have seen in the school have been dramatic.'
- Keeping children safe is a central aspect of the school's work. Children feel and are safe.
- Overall, standards of behaviour across the school are good. However, on occasions, staff do not make their expectations of behaviour clear. As a result, low-level disruption occurs which has a negative impact on learning.
- Learning at the school is active and fun. Children enjoy an interesting range of activities which appeal to their interests. However, at times, staff's expectations of children's abilities are not high enough and they do not develop children's language and mathematical skills effectively.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and covers all areas of children's learning. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted successfully. British values are woven through all aspects of the school's work.
- Some staff do not consistently use questioning which probes and deepens children's learning.
- A watchful eye is kept on the quality of teaching across the school. However, the feedback given to teachers after observations of their practice does not focus sharply enough on what children have learned.
- There is strong capacity within the school for continuous improvement and an enthusiasm and determination to do so.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve further the quality of teaching, and thereby outcomes for all children, by ensuring that:
 - staff have consistently high expectations of what children can achieve
 - staff consistently use questioning which develops and extends children's learning
 - staff take every opportunity to promote children's mathematical and language development.
- Improve further the leadership and management of the school by:
 - ensuring that feedback given to teachers after observations of their teaching focuses more sharply on the learning that is taking place
 - making sure that the full governing body of the school is constituted by 7 March 2019.
- Ensure that all staff make their expectations of behaviour clear so that any low-level disruption is eliminated.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school has been through a significant period of turbulence. At the last inspection, leadership and management of the school was judged to be inadequate. This was principally because governors had failed in their duty to appoint a headteacher. This is a legal requirement and has been resolved. All other key judgements were graded as good. The headteacher of Longshaw Infant school has become executive headteacher of both schools and the previous governing body has been replaced by an IEB.
- All members of the IEB are in the process of being constituted as the full governing body of the school. This is to take effect from 7 March 2019. Official confirmation of this was received from a variety of sources during the inspection, including from the director of children's services of Blackburn and Darwen Borough Council.
- Working with her senior leadership team, the executive headteacher has brought back stability to the school and galvanised staff. Staff are a close and tight-knit team. They feel valued and have an active voice in the school.
- Since her appointment in 2018, the executive headteacher has made significant changes which have had a positive impact on the provision. For example, the staffing team has been restructured, the learning environment enhanced, the security of the premises tightened and links with parents strengthened. A new tracking system has been introduced and revised systems and routines for the children established. The website has been redesigned and is now compliant with all the information that must be published. The school is now in a much stronger place than at the time of the last inspection.
- Senior leaders know the school well, its strengths and priorities for development. The school's self-evaluation is honest and insightful.
- The school development plan outlines key priorities for development. Staff have targets linked to these priorities. Lines of accountability are clear and the progress that the school is making towards achieving its goals is regularly reviewed.
- Leaders ensure that the quality of teaching across the school is checked frequently. This is done in a variety of ways, such as through informal tours of the school, planning reviews, formal lesson observations and scrutiny of children's work. However, the feedback given to teachers after formal observations of their teaching does not focus in detail on the actual learning that has taken place.
- Staff have undertaken a significant amount of training since the appointment of the executive headteacher. This ensures that they have the knowledge and skills to ensure that children are given a good start to their education. Staff also have opportunities to observe best practice at Longshaw Infant School.
- Effective use is made of the early years pupil premium funding to ensure that disadvantaged children achieve to their best. The executive headteacher has a good understanding of the barriers to learning that this group of children face. The money is spent wisely to support children academically, socially and emotionally. School assessment information and a scrutiny of work show that disadvantaged children are

achieving well.

- Good levels of support are afforded to children with SEND. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is a highly experienced practitioner and oversees the provision for children with SEND at the nursery and infant school. Children's needs are quickly identified and met in a sharing and inclusive environment. As a result, they make good progress from their different starting points.
- Children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which covers all areas of their learning and successfully promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through a range of meaningful experiences and resources, children gain an appreciation of the diversity of the world in which they live. British values are firmly embedded in all aspects of the school's work.
- Virtually all parents are effusive in their praise of the school's work. They find staff approachable and are kept well informed about their children's progress. All parents that spoke to the inspector were unanimous in their view that their children make good progress. Parents of children who speak English as an additional language commented positively on how much their children's knowledge of the English language had improved since starting at the school.
- The local authority and the school improvement partner have offered the school good levels of support. This is very much appreciated by senior leaders.

Governance of the school

- Members of the IEB are highly skilled professionals from a variety of backgrounds, including education.
- As a team, they are totally committed to ensuring that all children achieve to their best during their time at the school.
- Since their appointment, they have worked tirelessly alongside the executive headteacher and her team to successfully turn the fortunes of the school around.
- They have a secure understanding of what the school does well and further improvements that are needed.
- The finances of the school are very closely monitored to ensure that the school remains sustainable.
- Safeguarding duties are taken seriously.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders work well with parents and other agencies to ensure that the needs of vulnerable children are met.
- All staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. They have a good awareness of the indicators of abuse and neglect and procedures to follow.
- Staff talk with confidence about issues relating to the 'Prevent' duty, such as extremism and radicalisation.

- There are comprehensive procedures in place for the recruitment and selection of staff.
- All documentation examined during the inspection was fit for purpose and stored securely.
- The school site is secure, and visitors' credentials are checked on entry to the school.
- The single central record is compliant.
- At the time of the inspection, there were no breaches of the statutory welfare requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have judged that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school is good. Evidence gathered at this inspection confirms that this is the case.
- Children share warm relationships with staff. The organisation of the day with regard to adult-directed activities and activities that children choose for themselves meets the needs of children who attend, including the increasing proportion of children from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Staff generally make effective use of assessment information to plan activities which deepen children's learning. However, at times, some staff do not have high enough expectations of what some children can achieve, particularly with regard to their language and mathematical development. Consequently, on occasions when interacting with children, some staff miss opportunities to develop or extend these aspects of children's learning.
- Teachers ensure that the physical environment is inviting and conducive to learning. Children have ample room to move around freely and play in comfort. There are clearly defined independent play areas, both indoors and outside, which are generally well resourced and cover most areas of children's learning. Some of these resources are made from materials which provides children with real-life experiences.
- Some staff make good use of questioning to probe and deepen children's learning. For example, staff used questioning skilfully to encourage children to identify numbers that were missing from a line of numbers and then asked children to explain how they had worked this out. However, the use of high-quality questioning is inconsistent across the school.
- Overall, staff are deployed effectively and spend their time interacting with the children. Most staff model the correct use of language and encourage children to respond in sentences. Some staff introduce new and exciting words as children play, such as 'marching', 'stretching' and 'wiggling'. Such good practice further supports children's acquisition of language.
- Children are becoming keen readers. They enjoy listening to stories as part of a group or reading on their own for pleasure. Teachers display books prominently in some areas of the learning environment, enticing children, particularly the most able, to read.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Lessons are fun and actively engage all children. For example, children giggle with delight as they shake musical instruments and sing songs beginning with sounds they have identified.

- A wide range of materials to help develop writing skills are available, both indoors and outside, which appeal to both boys and girls. Boys and girls enjoy making marks with paint brushes and water as they play outdoors. In the building area, boys compile a list of materials that they will need to make a model.
- As they learn and play, teachers ensure that children have many opportunities to develop their musical and artistic talents.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Friendly children are a credit to the school and their families. They skip into school each morning and, without a backward glance, walk into the classroom happily chatting with staff and their friends. Parents do not stay long because children settle quickly.
- Children are learning the importance of sharing and taking turns. Many are developing a caring, positive attitude towards each other. They have a growing awareness that their actions can upset others.
- Healthy eating is promoted. Lunchtime is a pleasurable experience where children can sit and chat with their friends. They are taught key skills, such as sitting at the table while eating food and holding a knife and fork correctly.
- Children are learning to keep themselves safe. Staff make children aware of the importance of not talking to strangers. By practising fire drills, they become confident about how to vacate the building in the event of a fire. Staff also make children aware of how to cross the road safely.
- Children raise money for a range of charitable causes. This helps them understand that there are people in society who face challenging circumstances.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Children are polite and give a warm welcome to visitors to the school.
- Staff celebrate children's achievements through displays of their work and verbal praise. This helps to promote their confidence and self-esteem.
- Since the appointment of the executive headteacher, attendance has improved significantly. Parents are made aware of the importance of sending their children to school on a regular basis. Any unexplained absences are followed up quickly.
- Standards of behaviour around the school are generally good. However, on occasions, when staff do not make their expectations of behaviour clear, children's attention wanders and they become fidgety.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Children start at the school with knowledge and skills that are below those typically seen in children of a similar age. As a result of good teaching, most children make good progress across all areas of their learning.
- Children start at the school at various times throughout the academic year. Initially, staff quite rightly focus on getting the basics right, especially with regard to their physical, social and communication skills. Strong progress follows in other areas of learning because most children are ready to learn. However, at times, staff fail to spot opportunities to develop and extend children's language and mathematical skills during independent play and focused sessions.
- A close eye is kept on the progress that different groups of children make. Data is analysed purposefully at regular intervals throughout the year. As a result, any underachievement is quickly identified and addressed. For example, data highlighted that outcomes for boys in reading and writing lagged behind those of girls. Immediate action was taken. Boys were provided with a wider range of writing opportunities and reading materials which appealed to their interests. As a result, the difference between boys and girls is diminishing quickly.
- Leaders are proud of the good progress that disadvantaged children make during their time at the school. This group of children perform as well and often better than their peers. This is a result of the effective spending of the early years pupil premium which is used well to ensure that disadvantaged children achieve well and flourish.
- Taking into account their very diverse range of needs, children with SEND make good progress from their different starting points. This is because of good teaching, timely interventions and positive working partnerships with outside agencies.
- Children who speak English as an additional language settle well into school and are making strong progress in their acquisition of the English language.
- Although children achieve well, above all they have fun and enjoy their time at the school. Parents fully endorse this view.

School details

Unique reference number	119084
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10057950

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 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	105
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Mrs Susan Cliffe
Executive headteacher	Mrs A Batley
Telephone number	01254 698832
Website	www.longshawnurseryschoolandchildcarecentre.co.uk
Email address	office@longshawnursery.blackburn.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 May 2017

Information about this school

- Longshaw Nursery School is an averaged-sized nursery school.
- Most children are of White British heritage, although the proportion of children from minority ethnic backgrounds is increasing.
- Children start at the school at various times throughout the year and attend on a full- and part-time basis.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged children is above the national average.
- The proportion of children with SEND is below the national average.
- The headteacher of Longshaw Infant School became executive headteacher of both schools in 2018.
- An IEB was appointed by the Secretary of State for Education on 1 March 2018.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning at various times during the two-day inspection. All observations were carried out jointly with the executive headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, two deputy headteachers, staff, members of the IEB and representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector spoke to parents on the telephone and as they brought their children to school at the beginning of the day.
- The inspector looked at examples of children's work in their learning journeys and on display.
- The schools' work was analysed and the inspector looked at a range of documentation, including the school improvement plan and records relating to the quality of teaching. Documentation relating to attendance, safeguarding and the tracking of children's progress was also considered.
- The inspector took account of the nine responses from parents and six responses from staff to the Ofsted online questionnaires.

Inspection team

Sheila Iwaskow, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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