



Parkview Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112089
LEA Cumbria
Inspection number 278845
Inspection dates 25 April 2006 to 26 April 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Carole Cressey

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	St Georges Road
School category	Maintained		Millom
Age range of pupils	3 to 4		Cumbria, LA18 4JE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01229 772840
Number on roll	80	Fax number	01229 773909
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr David Gabbert
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Dianne Earley

Age group 3 to 4	Inspection dates 25 April 2006 - 26 April 2006	Inspection number 278845
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This nursery school is located in the small town of Millom on the edge of the Lake District. The local area has a relatively high level of social deprivation. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average. All children are white British and start school the term following their third birthday. About a fifth of the children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has a history of providing family support and has recently become part of a Children's Centre.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Parkview Nursery believes itself to be good. One parent wrote that it deserves top marks. The inspection agrees with the parent and judges the school to be outstanding. The school has exceptionally high aspirations for its children and is not daunted by the many barriers to learning. As a result, children achieve exceptionally well and, although most enter school with standards which are well below average, by the time they leave the nursery most are reaching the standards expected of them. The curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning are excellent.

The nursery school is very obviously a wonderful place to learn. This is evident from the children's eagerness as they come into school and by the number of parents who say their children cry when it isn't a school day! The school provides exceptionally high levels of care. It recognises that all children are unique individuals who need different kinds of support and teaching to enable them to learn effectively. Personal development and well-being are excellent. Children are learning to be kind and sensitive to each other and are beginning to realise that their actions have consequences for themselves and others.

Underpinning the school's work are excellent leadership and management. There is a vibrant sense of purpose as well as a tangible shared commitment and belief that every child matters and can achieve well and reach for the stars. The very supportive governing body has only recently been given delegated powers and its new role is still developing. The school has built upon the significant strengths celebrated in the previous inspection report and has good capacity to continue to improve. The school provides excellent value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the role of the governors so that they are fully involved in decision making, act as a critical friend and hold the school to account.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The majority of children start school with limited skills especially in literacy, numeracy and personal and social development, and overall standards are considerably lower than those expected for their ages. Children find it very difficult to relate to other children and adults, and have poorly developed speaking and listening skills. Reliable tracking of children's progress, challenging teaching, high expectations and an exceptionally stimulating environment ensure that every individual achieves outstandingly well. Boys and girls make equally rapid progress because the staff are aware of their different ways of learning. Children make very good progress in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development because all the activities are exciting and great fun. Older children and those who learn at a faster rate can confidently write their own names and are eager to make simple words. Boys'

literacy has improved greatly because there are opportunities for them to read and write about things that interest them, such as working in the sand pit which has been transformed into a thrilling 'building site' or digging for vegetables in the school garden. The children thrive in this inspiring environment and by the time they move on to other schools they are working at appropriate levels for their age, with a small number exceeding the expected goals. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities blossom because of the exceptional levels of care, patience and support and make outstanding progress towards their targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Because learning is such fun, the children make remarkable gains in their personal qualities and quickly adjust to school routines. The children love coming to school and attendance is average. As soon as children enter the nursery, their enthusiasm simply bubbles over. Even the newest of children rush to their key workers and are eager to find out what is happening during the day – are they going to be on 'tadpole watch', plant seeds, dig for potatoes or make music? – the choices are different every day. Most children are very lively, confident and friendly and show exceptional kindness to each other. They work very well together and on their own, maintaining high levels of concentration because the activities are so exciting. Because of the staff's flexibility and knowledge, the children with behavioural problems are fully integrated and make very good gains in their learning. One confident little boy said his nursery was good because 'everybody be good'. Indeed he is right; all children try hard to achieve excellent standards of behaviour. They are very keen to succeed and are eager to show their parents and carers their work at the end of the day. Children work safely and are good at selecting and clearing away resources. At snack times children learn how to wash and dry their own hands, and enjoy healthy foods. They are prepared very effectively for the next stage of their education, being equipped with good basic skills in literacy and numeracy.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Children are encouraged to become independent and successful learners, and this is a key factor in their rapid progress. The staff recognise that children learn in different ways and plan meticulously to meet individual needs. Planning is linked exceptionally well to assessment. Staff use the information from observations to pinpoint each child's progress and carefully identify the next steps in learning. This is especially the case for those with learning difficulties. Well matched and challenging work brings relevance and enjoyment to learning. Wherever possible, children handle real materials and staff are always on hand to extend children's knowledge and understanding. Teaching in the outdoor area is highly effective, as are

the use of role-play and information technology, in developing speaking and listening skills to promote early reading and writing. These basic skills are woven very imaginatively into every task. The extra large sand pit is a paradise for exuberant children, especially boys. Here, skilled teaching introduces reluctant readers and writers (usually boys) to mark-making, counting and the use of mathematical vocabulary in a way that makes it relevant to children's experiences. In all sessions teachers promote children's thinking skills. They ask open-ended questions, provide a good model for spoken English and, most important of all, give children time to be successful learners. This is a school where learning is a sheer pleasure. By the end of each session children go home having learned many new things such as: if you cut an apple in half you will find a star shape inside; that plants have roots and stems; that suddenly you can count up to 18 or write your own name without help. Children go home eager for the next exacting day of learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The children find the curriculum thrilling and stimulating. Across the school, it is exceptionally well planned to meet the needs of a challenging community and to break down the many barriers to learning. A wide range of exciting, high quality resources and activities challenge the children and inspire them to learn. The curriculum helps children to learn how to stay safe and healthy and develop a caring attitude not only to each other but also to their environment. Children are often seen absorbed in gently holding the school's guinea pigs, Lily and Lucy, or observing the fascinating growth of tadpoles into frogs and seeds into plants.

The excellent emphasis throughout the school on literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) makes a vital contribution to the children's future role in society and their economic well-being. Links with the community are excellent and children and their families benefit substantially from the school's involvement in the new Children's Centre. Initiatives such as the 'speaking and listening project' are highly successful in improving the concentration span of children and developing good attitudes to learning. The parents value these projects and see them as being vital to their children being successful learners when they move on to their next school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's strong belief that every child matters and can achieve well underpins every aspect of its work. Parents justifiably lavish praise on the school for the exceptional way it cares for individuals. They value the fact that the school works in partnership with them and fully includes them in helping the school provide the best care it can. Child protection procedures are robust and widely understood. As a result, children are safe and secure. Staff identify children with learning or behaviour difficulties quickly and work well with a wide range of agencies to ensure that they get the extra help they need. Health and safety routines and risk assessments are effective and conscientiously observed. Highly developed systems for assessing

academic progress contribute much to the children's progress. Parents particularly appreciate the books which include samples of work by their children and record their progress through the stepping-stones.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. There is an exceptionally strong determination shared by the headteacher, staff and governors to embrace the needs of all children, celebrate their innate uniqueness and build on their thirst for learning. The inspirational headteacher leads and manages the school with vision and flair, leading to consistency in all aspects of its work. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good and the school is in a strong position to build upon the high quality it provides. The effective process of self-evaluation, although modest in its judgement, accurately reflects the high quality provision the school makes. The sharp school improvement plan provides a very effective blueprint for the way ahead. There is no complacency and the staff enjoy new challenges, such as the development of the Children's Centre in which a wide range of agencies are coming together to provide an enhanced service for the community and its families. The headteacher monitors teaching regularly to maintain the high standards. All who work at the school are ambitious for the children's success, and enthusiastically and skilfully adopt and adapt new practices to enhance learning. The governing body has recently been given delegated powers and is beginning to take on the responsibilities of its new role. However, although the governors are very supportive of the school and have considerable confidence in the headteacher, their roles in strategic planning and in holding the school to account through challenge are as yet underdeveloped. Parents are unanimous in their view that the school is well led and managed. The inspection wholeheartedly agrees with them.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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25 April 2006

Dear Children

I really enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you for talking to me and showing me all the wonderful things that you do. Your teachers are brilliant. They are always thinking of new and exciting things for you to do. You are all becoming so clever. You are learning to write your own names, count up to ten, recognise different shapes and make super model cars and trucks which really move. Even though some of you are only three, you are finding out how tadpoles turn into frogs and how seeds become plants and flowers. How clever is that! Those of you who are nearly five are able to count up to twenty and know that five and five make ten. That shows that you are ready to move into the infant school.

Do you know what pleased me most? It was to see how very kind you are to each other and how you share your toys and play together really well. One of you told me that you all try to be good. I am so pleased to tell you that he was absolutely right. You all behave really well.

I can tell that you enjoy coming to nursery and your mums and dads tell me that many of you cry when you can't come to school. This shows just how much you enjoy learning about new things. I think your school is fabulous and I wish I was four again!

I hope you will always enjoy learning and going to school and that it will help you to become very happy and clever grown-ups.

Give my love to Lily and Lucy.

Mrs Carole Cressey