



Bacup Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119097
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280461
Inspection dates 21 March 2006 to 22 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Jennie Platt

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Cowtoot Lane
School category	Maintained		Bacup
Age range of pupils	3 to 4		Lancashire OL13 8EF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01706 873856
Number on roll	80	Fax number	01706 878852
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Kathleen Holt
Date of previous inspection	1 January 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Lyn Rider

Age group 3 to 4	Inspection dates 21 March 2006 - 22 March 2006	Inspection number 280461
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

Bacup Nursery serves a wide area which includes social and economic deprivation. The children's attainment when they start school is below average especially in social and language skills. A very small number of children are assessed as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Three children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and two are at an early stage of learning English. Recently the school has started to provide out-of-school care for approximately 20 children. The school currently has two temporary teachers and the headteacher works jointly between this nursery and the local Children's Centre. The school has recently been informed that its campaign to stay open has been successful.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Parents and the staff rightly identify this as an effective school that provides good value for money. Personal development is good and children thrive in the relaxed and caring atmosphere. From a low starting point, children achieve well and are now working at the level expected for their age. However, standards for children who have been in the nursery for five terms could be higher in writing. Teaching is good especially in making learning enjoyable. Relationships are very good and children behave well. Assessment procedures guide teachers well when planning activities but more use could be made of information to monitor the school's overall performance. The curriculum is lively and interesting. Leadership and management are good overall but have areas for improvement. Governors are supportive and are becoming more fully involved in monitoring what is happening and in deciding the school's priorities. The threat of closure affected staff morale and made it difficult to put some changes in place. Now the school's future is assured, it is already moving ahead with improvements especially to resources. This renewed enthusiasm, combined with more stability in staffing, means the capacity to improve is good.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the skills in writing especially for the children who have been in school for five terms.
- Improve assessment procedures so that it is easier to check how well children are doing compared with what is expected for this age range.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. From a low starting point, especially in language and social skills, children make good progress and are on course to reach the learning goals expected nationally at the end of the Foundation Stage. They make good progress in their personal and social skills because of the attention staff give to extending these skills. The daily sharing of a stimulating story and the opportunity to take a book home means children develop a real enthusiasm for reading. They enjoy making marks when 'writing' and are starting to form recognisable letters. However, the children who have been in school the longest (five terms) are not working at high enough levels in their writing and could achieve more. Progress in mathematics is good and children count confidently to 20 and recognise numbers. The school promptly identifies children with learning difficulties and /or disabilities and seeks advice to enable them to make good progress. The children who are learning through English as an additional language and who have recently joined the nursery have settled in well and are beginning to make progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Children thoroughly enjoy coming to nursery and like their teachers. They relate well to others and have established firm friendships. The majority of children attend regularly. They feel safe and are unsure about what to do if they have a problem because they say they are always happy. Behaviour is good although a few get over-boisterous if they are not in direct contact with an adult for a length of time. Many can concentrate on an activity for a long period. A few find it difficult to sustain interest and staff intervene with more ideas and discussion. They grow in independence as they follow the daily routines and this prepares them well for the future. The fruit stall is very popular and children recognise the importance of healthy lifestyles. Children learn that they have a part to play in the nursery, for example by tidying away and helping others. This awareness of others is extended to the community as children raise funds for charities and learn to act sensibly, for example when crossing the road.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. A range of cultures is celebrated and staff are looking for more ways to extend this provision with visits and visitors.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Staff know when to offer help and when to encourage more effort. Relationships are excellent and children confidently tackle new tasks sure in the knowledge that their attempts are appreciated. A common strength is the celebration of children's achievement in displays of work. High quality resources are used very imaginatively and this creates a busy and purposeful atmosphere. Adult-led activities are planned with much thought and practical activities are effective in promoting learning. This was seen in mathematics as children enthusiastically matched and counted socks. Writing is not taught as effectively because teachers are less sure about the specific skills they are aiming to develop. This hinders the systematic build up of skills. Support staff play a significant role by leading groups as well as supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Every member of staff has responsibility for assessing the progress of a small group of children. This system identifies any gaps in children's skills which are then addressed in future plans.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a rich and well-rounded curriculum. The focus is firmly on learning through a variety of first hand experiences. Adults watch closely to check that children of all ages and ability experience all that is on offer. The very good emphasis on

personal and social development helps children to become independent and develop their confidence to explore. Occasionally, too many activities overwhelm a few who flit between activities rather than staying involved in one for a length of time. Information and communication technology is promoted well through resources such as microwave ovens and toy drills. However, computers are not fully exploited to help children learn because staff do not always intervene to offer help when it is needed. The spacious outdoor area with its excellent equipment is a firm favourite with children. Visits to the library and market enhance children's knowledge of the local community. A good number of visitors get across important messages in an interesting way so that children grow in understanding about keeping safe and healthy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care offered by the school is good and makes a real difference to the children's lives. The key-worker system is effective and staff know their children well. Children feel secure and valued. Great care is taken to keep the learning environment safe. Child protection procedures are well established and an update in training is planned. The school works closely with a good range of support agencies to provide valuable help for the vulnerable and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Good systems are in place for helping children settle into the nursery and close links with the next school enables children to transfer smoothly. Staff share children's progress with them as they select samples and photographs for their records of achievement. However, the children are not always told how they can improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Overall leadership and management are good. The headteacher shoulders the majority of responsibilities which have been greatly increased with the absence of two permanent teachers. She has also been heavily involved in keeping the school open. She has managed these difficulties very well. Parents' very positive comments are testimony to the way the nursery has sustained its good reputation and built on previous strengths. The headteacher has successfully introduced changes to the learning environment and the organisation of the curriculum that have improved the quality of the provision. The management of the provision for children with learning difficulties and /or disabilities is good.

The headteacher encourages all staff to be self-critical and discuss school improvement. This collaboration provides an accurate picture of particular strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher intends to extend consultation to parents and governors. Current priorities are included in the school's improvement plan with a range of suitable actions to tackle any concerns. However, the school does not collate assessment information sufficiently well to gain an accurate view of its overall performance. The governors have campaigned tirelessly to keep the school open. They have undergone training in

self evaluation and are now ready to become more involved in monitoring the provision. The staff and the governors form a strong team that is well placed to move forward.

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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?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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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Bacup Nursery School

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OL13 8EF

23 March 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for your friendly welcome when I visited your nursery. I really enjoyed my visit and was very pleased with the way you chatted to me and told me about your favourite activities.

I liked these things the most:

you told me you are happy at school and I enjoyed hearing you laugh and giggle with your friends

your teachers plan a wonderful number of activities for you so that the nursery is an exciting place to be

you enjoy being in the fresh air and know that eating fruit is healthy

you behave well and care for your friends

your nursery is organised well and your parents are very happy about what happens in the nursery.

I have asked your teachers to look at the following things to make your nursery even better:

to encourage you to do more writing

to look more closely at the progress you make.

I am sure that you will continue to enjoy yourself at nursery especially outside now that it is getting warmer. I wish you and your families well for the future.

With best wishes

Mrs J E Platt (Inspector)