



Turncroft Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119099
LEA Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number 280463
Inspection dates 29 March 2006 to 30 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Lynne Read

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Highfield Road
School category	Maintained		Darwen
Age range of pupils	3 to 4		Lancashire BB3 2DN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01254 701534
Number on roll	102	Fax number	01254 701534
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr David Bent
Date of previous inspection	1 June 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Patricia Rudd

Age group 3 to 4	Inspection dates 29 March 2006 - 30 March 2006	Inspection number 280463
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a nursery school offering part-time education for children who are at least three years old. It is currently in a trial period as an innovative, self-financing Extending Nursery School. It offers breakfast, and after school and holiday clubs for children aged 2 to 8, together with lunches and part-time care for 3 year olds. This inspection covers only the school's nursery provision.

Most children are of white British heritage; 16% have an Asian background. Around 12% of pupils speak English as an additional language. The socio-economic characteristics of the area are below average. On entry to the nursery, children's attainment is generally below that usually seen. Around 2% of the children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This nursery school judges that it provides a good standard of education. The inspection supports this and, in addition, has identified some outstanding features. The school has a deservedly high reputation and provides good value for money.

The nursery is well managed and the leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. She has been very successful in developing the valued care services, and in providing a stimulating learning environment with a rich, broad curriculum. Parents are extremely satisfied with the nursery which has strong links with community services, other schools, and specialist agencies. Its other strengths include children's personal development and the quality of the support and guidance they receive.

When children enter the nursery at age three, there are wide variations in their previous learning. Overall it is below average. Children make good progress overall, and exceptional progress in personal and social development. This is because teaching is consistently good. It is based on accurate assessments of what the children have learnt and what they need to learn next. The staff provide a wide and balanced range of experiences so that children's attainment rises to average when they transfer to primary school. Children's progress and the quality of provision are checked routinely. The information is shared between staff and swift action taken to remedy any identified weaknesses. However, evaluations of this monitoring are often completed informally. The school does not record its successes and so does not establish the strengths it should preserve and build upon.

The high standards of provision and progress seen at the last inspection have been maintained and school development planning has been improved. There is very good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the nursery's self-evaluation identifies and records its strengths so that it can preserve and build upon them.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When they enter the nursery, children's prior learning is generally below that usually seen in the age group. A few are well advanced but some have significant difficulties with social and communication skills. Overall, progress is good for both boys and girls and attainment is in line with the average by the time they transfer to their reception classes. In personal, social and emotional development, children make exceptional progress because this is seen as a priority. Consequently, children's attitudes are excellent. This enables them to do well in other areas of learning and to succeed in the challenging work that their teachers set for them. Children make a good start in early reading and writing and in their understanding of mathematics. They develop good skills of independent learning as they investigate, explore and ask their own

questions. Physical and creative development progresses at a good pace because children have imaginative role play areas and an exciting selection of activities to encourage exercise and dexterity. Children with learning difficulties are very well supported by staff and outside agencies; they make exceptional progress. Pupils from ethnic minority groups, including those who are learning English as an additional language, progress well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. This is higher than the school's evaluation. Children thoroughly enjoy coming to nursery and attendance is good. Behaviour is outstanding and, at this early age, children show exceptional consideration for others; they share readily. They follow the routines and high expectations that their teachers set for them. For example, they tidy away quickly when the bell rings and they organise themselves for story time. This is helping them to prepare for later school routines and adult life.

Spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is promoted very well. Constant praise and many rewards encourage good work and actions. Collaborative activities and the optional lunchtime sessions encourage social interaction. Children develop a sense of the spiritual, for example, as they explore the signs of spring in the garden.

Children know about healthy eating and adopt safe practices, when using climbing frames, for example. Most express their likes and dislikes clearly and staff take note of their opinions when planning activities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school is right to judge teaching and learning as good overall. In personal and social development, they are outstanding. Happy and hardworking staff successfully integrate parents and carers into the learning team. They know how young children learn best and build challenging tasks into exciting play activities. High quality spoken interaction boosts learning and extends children's communication skills. The outdoor area is used very effectively to promote physical development but there is room to extend provision for creative play and investigation.

The continuous assessment of children's progress is a major strength of the teaching and is used to plan tasks and challenges for each individual. As a result staff know their group of children extremely well and are able to tailor work accurately to their needs. The provision for children who have learning difficulties is excellent. Staff quickly notice when children are having difficulties and the school secures expert help where necessary

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and planning is meticulous. All children have access to a wide range of experiences to help them develop enquiring minds and good concentration. A constant strong emphasis on developing personal and social skills makes the children confident learners.

The curriculum achieves a very good balance between sessions that staff lead and activities that children choose for themselves. The nursery is very well organised and resourced so that children are guided and encouraged to try out new things. This helps to build confidence and expands their horizons. Staff take great care to maintain interest by frequently changing activities and resources for learning. The outdoor curriculum has yet to provide sufficiently for role play and for opportunities to learn about the world. Social and health education is covered well and meets the needs of young children.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care and protection of children are seen as paramount by the school. They are outstanding. Parents commend the standard of care and feel involved in their children's education, thanks to excellent introduction arrangements at the start of nursery, and to the good communication and informative newsletters. They especially like the records of achievement that are sent to them after each term because the records paint a clear picture of each child's personal and academic progress. Child protection procedures are firmly established. The allocation of key adults to work with small groups leads to excellent relationships and ensures that children feel secure. The school knows that this area is a strength but, in its own evaluation, had not given itself full credit for the excellent provision.

Children are very well supported in their learning because staff plan the next steps for each individual to build carefully on what has already been learnt. The purpose of tasks is explained and children are encouraged to review and celebrate their own success.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good with some strengths. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and leads the drive for excellence. The outstanding caring ethos is shared by staff who work enthusiastically to ensure that children do their best and have equal access to all activities. As a result, children are happy and flourish. There is a great pride in the school, reflected in the high quality of administration, cleanliness and resources. Staff work as a strong team and support the headteacher by carrying out management responsibilities. They check provision in their designated areas and contribute to improvement planning. Evaluation is completed orally at

meetings but it is not fully recorded. As a result, although the school tackles weaknesses very successfully, it does not always fully identify the aspects of its work that are excellent and so provide the basis for its future development.

Management is successful in maintaining the local authority funded education alongside the care services because there is very good deployment of staff expertise, including the services of a family worker. The school takes very good account of parents' views and many of the questionnaires they return commend the staff's open communication with them. Governors are well informed and are working to develop their monitoring role. Governance is good. The chairman is a strong driving force in developing and maintaining this innovative approach to nursery education and in supporting management. Creative and ambitious forward planning make the school well placed to expand its education and care provision even further. All statutory requirements are met.

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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?	1	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	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	2	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	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?	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?	2	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	2	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	2	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	NA
Learners are educated about sexual health	NA
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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Turncroft Nursery School

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29 March 2006

Dear Children

I enjoyed coming to your nursery. Thank you for showing me all the exciting activities you do and for telling me what you like. I think the best things are these.

The way you all stay so busy, are very happy and get on with each other so well.

How your teachers take excellent care of you and help you to learn.

All those games and activities that you can choose from, including your 'super highway'.

Your records of achievement that show how well you are doing. Your parents like these as well.

Your excellent behaviour, your friendliness and the fact that you like trying new things.

Your teachers are always planning new things for you and they have some interesting ideas, especially for your outdoor area. I hope that you enjoy the new activities. I think it would be a good idea for you, your parents and all adults in school to congratulate yourselves on what a good job you are all doing.

Yours faithfully

Mrs L Read

(Lead inspector)