

Hindley Surestart Nursery

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	106397
Local Authority	Wigan
Inspection number	287503
Inspection dates	4-5 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Mike Hewlett

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Haskayne
Headteacher	Mrs Janet MacGowan
Date of previous school inspection	13 May 2002
School address	Mornington Road Hindley Wigan Lancashire WN2 4LG
Telephone number	01942 776131
Fax number	01942 776131

Age group	3-5
Inspection dates	4-5 July 2007
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Amended Report Addendum

Number on roll incorrect. CofG Name incorrect

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This large Nursery is situated in Hindley, an area of social and economic disadvantage, near Wigan. It provides free part-time nursery education for children between the ages of three and four, as well as fee paying full day-care places for up to 20 children. The vast majority of children come from White British backgrounds. Only three percent are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities and most of these have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. On entering Nursery, most children have skills that are just below those normally expected of children of this age. The Nursery was designated a Children's Centre in 2006 and shares the building with the local Surestart programme. In 2005 it was awarded the Wigan Quality Standard.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

'My child really loves coming to nursery. He's happy, safe and I know he's well looked after,' is typical of the comments made by parents and carers. Their assessment is an accurate one because Hindley is a satisfactory nursery where the provision for children's personal development and well-being is good. It provides satisfactory value for money. The school's self-evaluation is accurate in most areas, judging itself satisfactory overall. The inspection confirms this view and recognises the good features in children's personal development. It also finds that the progress since the last inspection and the care, guidance and support offered are satisfactory rather than good. This is because some of the teaching and learning issues identified last time are still to be addressed and systems for tracking individual children's progress are not rigorous enough.

The acting headteacher, who arrived as deputy headteacher less than two terms ago, has set out a clear vision for the future, acknowledging that the current provision needs to be improved. Monitoring of teaching and learning does not happen consistently and this means weaknesses in the classroom have not been picked up fast enough. Whilst changes have been made to the classroom organisation, it is too soon to measure their impact. Consequently, the school's judgement on its capacity to improve is overgenerous. It is satisfactory rather than good. Governors are actively involved in the work of the school and welcome the changes being made. They are beginning to challenge in a supportive and constructive way.

The majority of parents are happy with the school and are pleased with the wide range of experiences their children have. 'There is so much for them to choose and they are encouraged to try everything.' is typical of the views expressed.

Most children start Nursery with standards that are just below those expected for their age in all aspects of their development. They make satisfactory progress overall, with the majority meeting the standards expected by the time they leave. There is no discrepancy between the overall rates of progress made by different groups, but the Nursery has identified that some children could do better. Staff work hard to ensure that the transition from home to school is made as smooth as possible. Parents value the induction days where they can share the 'school experience' with their children with staff available to answer any queries or concerns they may have. Children arrive excitedly at school, choose from a good range of interesting activities and soon become confident and independent learners. They understand the need for healthy snacks and can explain how their own 'eco garden' will soon be supplying 'our own lettuce to eat'. They enjoy playing outside and can explain how they need to keep themselves safe as, for example, by avoiding the area near the moving swings.

The quality of teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory. Staff provide a wide range of interesting tasks, which engage all children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, in experimenting and learning through play. They support and encourage children well, but planning lacks detail and teachers are not always clear about precisely what children are expected to learn from their activities. The pace of some activities is too slow resulting in learning opportunities being missed and consequently, children do not always learn as well as they could. In addition, the school's records of individual children's progress are not yet sharp enough to plan the next steps in learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen the monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure that the quality of teaching and children's learning improves.
- Increase the pace of activities, ensuring that staff consistently challenge children to develop their thinking and learning in discussions.
- Ensure that the planning of work informs staff of precisely what children are expected to learn and delivers learning activities that are well matched to their different needs.
- Develop assessment systems which give staff an accurate view of children's attainment and progress and enable them identify the next stages in learning.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children settle quickly into Nursery and enjoy the wide range of learning activities on offer. This helps them to become eager learners and they make satisfactory progress. By the time they leave, the majority are well placed to reach standards normally expected on entry to full-time education. Many children could do better if the learning activities were planned in more detail, better matched their needs and if their individual rates of progress were checked more accurately. The emphasis on personal development is rightly seen as a priority and, as a result, children make good progress in this area, becoming confident, sociable individuals.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress towards their targets because of the individual support they receive. Other groups, including higher attainers, make similar rates of progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Children really enjoy coming to the Nursery. From the minute they arrive, they launch themselves wholeheartedly into the activities on offer. When asked, they say they like their activities and playing with their friends. Relationships between the staff and the children are very good. Most children are gaining a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. They are involved in discussing nursery rules such as the 'Kind Hands' system. As a result, they behave well and show respect for one another. Children enjoy celebrating major festivals and regularly contribute to charity appeals. Healthy snacks and exercise feature throughout the day and children can explain why both are important. They feel secure and know who to turn to if they have a problem. The organisation of the Nursery requires children to make independent choices in their learning. Consequently, they become confident learners. Children learn about the wider world from their planned visits to the local area and from visitors such as the artist who came to work with them. Attendance and punctuality are above average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff enable children to become independent and eager learners. They encourage them to make choices and to explore new experiences; for example, with clay, sand, water and soil. Activities are varied and well organised and there is a good balance between the different areas of the curriculum. Wherever possible, children handle real materials and, when staff are on hand to encourage and support them, they make good gains in their learning. However, there are times when the adult role is supervisory, resulting in missed opportunities to extend and accelerate children's learning. This is because planning lacks sufficient detail about what different groups and individuals are expected to learn from the tasks. Furthermore, the tracking systems do not identify individual children's progress rigorously enough and this makes it difficult for staff to work out what the next steps in the children's learning should be. Parents value being involved in their children's education. They enjoy reading the records of achievement and attending meetings in the Nursery which explain how they can support their children's learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with particular strengths in personal and social development. It enables children to learn how to stay safe and healthy and develop a caring attitude not only to one another but also to their environment. Bringing apples to school to feed the pet tortoise and remembering to water their 'eco garden' help children become responsible members of their school community. The curriculum is predominantly led by children's own interests. As a result, they are provided, indoors and outdoors, with plenty of opportunities which capture their interests and promote their literacy, numeracy and creative and physical development. Enrichment through visits to the local area widen children's horizons and broaden their knowledge and understanding of the world. Links with extended services that share the building provide children and their families with an increasing range of choices, for example, enabling them to access day care and family support.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support given to children are satisfactory. Clear procedures for child protection and safeguarding children are in place. The allocation of key adults to work with groups of children strengthens the quality of relationships between the children and their parents and the staff. Great care and sensitivity is shown towards each child. Consequently, children feel secure and valued, particularly those who are vulnerable or who have specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children have little involvement yet in sharing their learning with others or in knowing how well they are doing. Furthermore, the school's systems to check on their progress are not sharp enough. Good relationships exist with outside agencies such as health visitors and social services when additional help is needed. Parents are encouraged to become partners in their children's learning and some benefit from the courses that staff provide.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Rapid turnover and absences at leadership level have caused disruption and uncertainty amongst the staff. Nevertheless, working closely with the acting headteacher and governors, they have created a family learning environment where children are happy, secure and unaffected by the changes. The acting headteacher has already identified areas that need to be improved and the Nursery's self-evaluation documentation is accurate and honest. Sensibly, the leadership has not tried to change too much at once. However, monitoring the quality of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough at present and needs to be tackled urgently so that weaknesses in these areas can be put right. Furthermore, the changes made have happened only recently and it is too soon to measure their impact. The school has sufficient resources and they are used appropriately. Good links exist with parents to support the Nursery's work and their views, as well as those of the children, are listened to and acted upon where appropriate.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Hindley Surestart Nursery, Wigan, WN2 4LG

Thank you for talking to me about the interesting things you do in the Nursery. I enjoyed being with you and watching your activities. I particularly liked the following things about your school.

- You like your activities and really enjoy finding things out.
- You are kind and helpful to your friends.
- Your key workers give you enjoyable and interesting things to do and take care of each one of you.
- The way in which you talked so confidently about keeping healthy and staying safe.
- How sensible you all were when you had to make choices.
- I have asked the adults who work with you to plan your activities in a bit more detail and to keep checking how well you are doing. I have also asked them to make sure that you are all learning as well as you can. You can help by always doing your best and keeping on enjoying your activities.

Best wishes to you all. I enjoyed watching you learn.