

Midland Road Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107189
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	287734
Inspection dates	26–27 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Jane Hughes

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	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	72
School	
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Mrs J Dix
Date of previous school inspection	13 February 2001
School address	Bateman Street Bradford West Yorkshire BD8 7DJ
Telephone number	01274 546492
Fax number	01274 546492

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This inner-city 54-place nursery school draws children from an area of significant economic and social disadvantage. Most children have either Mirpuri Pakistani or Sylheti Bangladeshi heritage and speak languages other than English at home. Many children have little or no understanding of English on entry to the nursery. Few children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school receives funding through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) for some bilingual staffing.

The recently opened children's centre, also led by the headteacher, shares the building and offers extended provision for local families.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

'Midland Road Nursery School is doing an excellent job for the local community and its children' is a view commonly held by parents. Their accurate summation goes some way to illustrate just why this is an outstanding school in virtually every respect. It provides first-class opportunities for young children to grow into increasingly effective learners. Indeed, it encourages children and their parents to fall in love with lifelong learning and to achieve as well as possible. As a result of such success, the school provides excellent value for money. Through careful monitoring of its work, the school's first-rate leadership and management have a largely accurate view of its practice, although some judgements are overly modest. This is because the headteacher is always searching for new ways to become even better. There has been clear progress in areas previously identified for development and the school shows an undeniably outstanding capacity to improve, for there is no complacency here.

Through every element of its work, the school fulfils its aims. The welcoming and secure environment coupled with impressive levels of care, guidance and support ensure that children grow daily in confidence and self-esteem. At the same time, they become more emotionally self-aware and begin to show sensitive regard for the needs of others. Such important life skills for their future success and well-being add an extra dimension to children's outstanding personal development. Children bring few personal boundaries to nursery with them, but by the time they leave children show self-control and perseverance, such as when trying to coax stick insects onto their hands without hurting the fragile creatures. The cracking, practical curriculum is packed with excitement, creativity and adventure so that children plead to come to school even when they are ill.

Children's achievement is outstanding. Although children join the school with skills well below those expected for their age, the consistently outstanding quality of teaching and learning ensures that they develop skills broadly in line with those expected for nursery age children. Higher-attaining children reach some of the standards expected of children a year older. In particular, children make significant progress in their knowledge of the English language and this helps them to settle better when they move on to primary school. Staff are able to refer children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to on site health professionals now that the Children's centre is open, and this helps significantly to move forward their learning. Even so, there are times when teachers are not quick enough to stop some of the boys from jumping in with answers during large-group activities, and this restricts the thinking time for others in the group.

Speaking fulsomely about the excellent links the school establishes with families and the wider community, parents say: 'Outreach workers open up our lives.' The school, along with its extended provision, family learning programmes and bilingual support, helps children settle easily and brings new skills within easy reach of parents. As a result, more parents are aware of the value of play. They see the impact they can have on their children's learning both at home and in school, and also find the school helps them bring new skills to the local community.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that boys do not dominate learning experiences during whole-group sessions.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children join the school with skills well below those expected for their age, particularly their social, communication and mathematical skills. Many are learning to speak English as an additional language. Almost all have limited awareness of the world beyond their own family. Children make the best possible use of highly enjoyable learning experiences both in the classroom and outdoors and, as a result, they achieve exceptionally well in all areas of learning. By the time they leave the nursery school for Reception classes in other schools, their skills are broadly in line with those expected for their age. A few higher-attaining children are partway to reaching the goals set for children by the end of Reception. The school's recent focus on reading and in making links between sounds and letters has been successful and these elements of children's communication, language and literacy have improved. Accurate assessments on entry ensure that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as other groups of children because of the early identification of their individual needs and the skilful support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children enjoy every minute here. Excellent relationships and first-rate behaviour enable them to wring great enjoyment from every activity. They squeal with delight as they scramble to find hidden grapefruit halves in the wooded areas outside and find a spider and its trapped fly nestling inside. Enchanted, they lap up stories in English or their home languages and talk about them with adults. They learn much about healthy lifestyles as snack times bring forth juicy, rainbow-hued fruits and vegetables, some of which the children plant and nurture themselves. They know, for example, that home-grown spinach with pasta is good for them. Children hear constant messages on how to stay safe and who to turn to for help. Along with many parents, they relish trips out to places as yet unimagined such as the local woods. These rich experiences result in children's outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children show sensitive regard for the feelings of others and have an increasing understanding of the many cultures in modern society. These elements of their personal development, along with impressive gains in their basic skills, provide a very secure foundation for future success. Most parents bring their children to school regularly, although some absence is due to extended family trips abroad and sickness bouts common among children this age.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Parents acknowledge that 'teachers get the best out of everybody here'. Excellent relationships allow children to relax, feel secure and absorb the wealth of information that surrounds them each day. Teachers create the most exhilarating learning environments. For example, dedicated spaces house every aspect of learning, supported by children's work, beautifully displayed along with eye-catching models to support children's independent learning. Staff give great thought to how best to motivate young children. They know that some children require the stability of familiar faces and so the adults change rooms half-termly so less confident children will happily go to sample activities in the other room, secure in the knowledge that their regular teacher

will be with them. Such examples of thoughtful practice are the key to the first-class outcomes teachers regularly coax from children. Their expectations are high. Nevertheless, some boys are overly competitive at times and try to answer first so that opportunities for other children to answer adults' questions are sometimes limited.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

A wonderland of fascinating activities greets children. Walls heave with displays of children's colourful work, displayed to best advantage so they can see how adults value their contributions. Blood-red ladybirds vie for attention with dirty brown straggly spiders, and a myriad of digital photographs chart children's progress over different activities. Skilful staff bring experiences to life for the children, who circulate at will between different areas of learning, indoors and outside. This is achieved with minimal fuss and consistent expectations. The inviting outdoor environment with its new veranda decorated with lush plants provides a fertile backdrop to frame children's imaginary or observed paintings, writing and role-play. Each area of learning is well represented but, in particular, there are very special elements to support children's burgeoning knowledge and understanding of the world. The school's 'Creative Partnerships' work has initiated opportunities to work on large-scale projects such as outdoor collages to brighten the environment during the recent building work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents comment: 'There is nothing more valuable than the memories you have with your child.' The school works with tremendous dedication to compile a rich treasure trove of memories for parents and children to look back on. Immensely impressive records of achievement bulge with colourful anecdotes and perceptive observations of children's progress over the months. Each milestone spills from the page, illustrated with well chosen photographs and evaluative text to aid future planning. Assessments are meticulously recorded and discussed by staff as they plan weekly activities. Children's strengths and development areas are quickly identified and there is high quality support for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those learning English as an additional language. Adults take first-class care of children's physical and emotional well-being. The new 'peer to peer massage' sessions are popular and help children to react in more measured ways. All the appropriate safeguarding and health and safety procedures are in place. Excellent links with day care staff ensure that induction and transition programmes bring security to children and parents.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher's highly effective leadership skills ensure that the school continues to develop and open up more opportunities for children, families and the local community. Parents say: 'We'd be lost without this school.' The headteacher has steered the school very well during a period of turbulent staffing and significant change. Her clear focus on high quality provision has ensured the largely seamless integration of the nursery school provision with the extended services of the newly established Children's centre. Senior leaders and governors prioritise the well-being of all the children and their families. Governors play an increasingly active role in the school's life and work and understand the school's priorities. All staff are encouraged to

play an important part in the development of the school's work. Efficient administrators, lunchtime and ancillary staff ensure that the school runs smoothly from day -to day.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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 Midland Road Nursery School, Bradford BD8 7DJ.

Thank you for telling me about all the things you do at nursery when I came to see you. Here is my short story of what I found out about your school.

Up a tiny cobbled street, near an enormous football ground, there is a nursery school hiding. It doesn't look very big but it has a very big heart. Every day, laughing children run up the cobbles because they are so happy to be there. They are happy for lots of reasons.

- All the adults are very kind and look after them really well.
- Teachers help them to do very, very well and learn lots of new things like dancing with scarves and massaging each other gently.
- Classrooms are full to bursting with fun things to do, like being a vet.
- The children spend lots of time outside climbing, playing or looking for insects.
- Everything is interesting and mums and dads come in to learn too.

The mums and dads always say how lucky they are to have this nursery near to where they live. They tell everyone about the nursery and to take their children there. When it's time to go home, the children skip happily back down the cobbles with books or games to play with. They love it at their nursery.

When a school is as good as your school, we use a special word to describe it - 'outstanding' - what a long word! But you're so clever; I bet you can count how many letters there are in that long word. Your teachers will tell you that I asked them to remind you, especially the boys, not to shout out answers when teachers ask questions. This will help everyone to have a fair turn at finding the right answer. I know you'll try really hard to remember that.

I hope you have a lovely summer playing on the new veranda and enjoying all the beautiful flowers and vegetables you grow.