



Bram Longstaffe Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112092
Local Authority Cumbria
Inspection number 289170
Inspection dates 11–12 October 2006
Reporting inspector Shirley Herring

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Farm Street
School category	Maintained		Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria
Age range of pupils	0–4		LA14 2RX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01229 894638
Number on roll (school)	54	Fax number	01229 894638
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Stephen Smart
		Headteacher	Ms Jacqueline Drake
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2002		

Age group 0–4	Inspection dates 11–12 October 2006	Inspection number 289170
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Bram Longstaffe Nursery School provides education for children aged 3 to 4 years. Since 2005 it has been part of a Children's Centre that also offers a range of extended services for children from birth to four years old. It serves an area of considerable social and economic deprivation. Almost all children are from a White British background and very few children have a home language other than English. A small proportion of children have learning difficulties and disabilities. Most children attend Nursery part time and many children have experienced other facilities in the Children's Centre before they start in the Nursery.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Bram Longstaffe is a good Nursery school, which parents describe as having 'wonderful relationships with the local community!' Before starting in the Nursery most children have already experienced some of the wealth of facilities of the Children's Centre, which helps them to settle quickly into the Nursery and make good progress.

Children enjoy coming to school because of the interesting experiences on offer. The good relationship with their key worker who is the adult with overall responsibility for the child's care, and the individual attention they receive makes children feel safe and secure. They adopt a healthy lifestyle because of the healthy snacks and lunches and the regular exercise in the interesting outdoor area. They make a good contribution to the school community through taking turns and tidying up. They develop independence as well as the ability to work together and this is a good preparation for later life.

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are generally below what is usual for their age. Good teaching, with a strong emphasis on developing language and social skills, helps children to make good progress, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities or whose home language is not English. Their skills are similar to other children of their age by the time they leave the Nursery.

Leadership and management are good overall, and the strong emphasis on the needs of the individual helps all children to achieve well. The facilities and support offered for the whole family make a good contribution to children's learning. The school's evaluation of its work is accurate in all respects, though the findings are not collected in a methodical way to make the most effective use of the information.

Teachers assess children's progress regularly through observing them closely during an activity and the 'Learning Story', a written account of what the child achieved, gives a delightful snapshot of children's learning at that time. However, the information gained is not used systematically to track children's progress through the Nursery.

The curriculum is good and there is an exciting range of experiences on offer. However, the information from plans is not collated to ensure that there is a balance between different areas of learning over the year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Organise assessment information more systematically to track children's progress.
- Collate and monitor plans to ensure that children experience a balance between different areas of learning over the year.
- Evaluate the work of the school in a more methodical way.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the nursery with skills that are below what is usual for their age, particularly in language and social skills. They make good progress in their time in school. The 'Learning Journals', a collection of each child's pictures and stories provide an overview of their individual progress. These show that the majority reach the expected level for their age by the time they leave. Achievement is good because of the good teaching, which is based on the needs of the individual child. The strong emphasis on developing social and language skills enables children to progress well in these areas.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well because their needs are identified at a very early stage, often before they start in the Nursery, and they receive a good level of support. The achievement of the very small number of children whose home language is not English is good because of the individual attention they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. The strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development encourages children to have respect for each other and an understanding of right and wrong. Behaviour is good as a result. Awareness of other cultures is fostered in a good way through stories, books and toys, which reflect cultural diversity.

Children enjoy coming to school and attendance is better than is usual for young children. They learn about a healthy lifestyle through regular exercise outside and healthy snacks and lunches. One parent was pleased to report an improvement in her child's eating habits at home because of the good influence of the Nursery. Children feel safe and secure because of the warm atmosphere in school and the good relationships developed with their key worker. Children also learn to stay safe by joining the group who learn to swim at the local swimming baths. They make a positive contribution to the school community through tidying away and by taking turns. This also prepares them well for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good and children learn well. All adults take every opportunity to talk to children and to encourage them to speak. This develops their speaking and listening skills well. Children respond positively to the high expectations to tidy up, take turns and to sit down for their snack, and this contributes well to their personal development.

Classrooms are organised to encourage children's independence, for example placing their own painting in the drying rack.

Teachers assess children's progress regularly through close observations and the resultant children's 'Learning Stories' are a delight to read and are valued by the parents. However, the wealth of information gained is not organised systematically to track children's progress and development of skills through the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of the children well. It is firmly based on practical experiences and shows a good understanding of how young children learn. The strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development helps children to develop confidence and independence. Adults are skilled at picking up on children's interests and adapting tasks to suit individual needs. Weekly plans show that activities on offer include all the different areas of learning. However, the information from planning is not put together to ensure that there is a balance between the different areas of learning across the year.

Provision is extended well through the links with other facilities in the Children's Centre and by a range of visits and visitors to school, for example an artist and a musician.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The Nursery takes good care of the children and all the recommended procedures are in place to safeguard their safety. All the children receive good individual support so they make good progress. This emphasis on supporting the needs of each child is a crucial element in the good achievement of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and in the very few children whose home language is not English. A good feature is the school's work with families so that parents can extend children's learning at home.

Many 'Learning Journals' give good suggestions as to how children can improve, though this is not used consistently through the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The strong emphasis on the importance of developing the whole child results in all children achieving well. The headteacher and the assistant headteacher monitor the work of the school well and their evaluations are accurate in all respects. However, the wealth of information gathered is not collated systematically to make the most effective use of their findings.

Governance is good. Governors are involved in the school on a regular basis and support its development well.

Improvement has been satisfactory since the last inspection. There have been good improvements in provision for knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, but the issue of formalising the monitoring of the school's work remains.

The Nursery has developed as a Children's Centre over the recent past, extending the range of services on offer. It has quickly gained a good reputation in the community it serves. This indicates that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
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	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

Bram Longstaffe Nursery School

Farm Street

Barrow-in-Furness

Cumbria

LA14 2RX

13 October 2006

Dear Children

I really enjoyed visiting you all in Bram Longstaffe Nursery. Thank you for making me feel so welcome and inviting me to have lunch with you in The Orange Room. I liked the healthy food that the cook makes for you.

You all seem very happy in your good Nursery, with lots of interesting things to do. All the adults take good care of you and help you to learn well. They talk to you a lot and are always there to help you when you need it. I was pleased to see how hard you are trying to help yourself, such as putting your own paintings in the drying rack.

I enjoyed reading your 'Learning Stories' and I know that your mums and dads enjoy them too. I could tell how hard you are working and how much you are learning. I have asked your teachers to use all the information in the stories to check that you are all doing as well as you can. They are going to make sure you try all the different activities each week

Yours sincerely

Shirley Herring

Lead inspector