

# Fairfield Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119086
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	291311
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jackie Barnes

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	80
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Robert Allonby
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Liz Klavins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 June 2001
<b>School address</b>	Fairfield Street Accrington Lancashire BB5 0LD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01254 231589
<b>Fax number</b>	01254 872198

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The state-funded nursery is an integral part of the recently established Fairfield Children's Centre and is oversubscribed. It is situated near the centre of Accrington and serves an area that has above average unemployment and overcrowding. The nursery population is stable. Children attend part-time for three terms before they move on to one of a number of Reception classes in local schools. Their attainment on entry is below that usual for three-year-olds. About half of the children are from White British backgrounds and the remainder mainly of Asian heritage from Pakistan. A high proportion of the children have limited skills in spoken language including many at the early stages of learning English. The number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than usual.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding nursery firmly embedded in the Children's Centre's provision for the locality. Parents are very enthusiastic about the progress their children make. They are also keen to explain how helpful it is to have other childcare and family facilities in the same building, as they get to know the staff, and the children are in familiar surroundings. A few said this coordination gives them the confidence to take up paid work knowing their children are happy and safe.

The children achieve exceptionally well. The refurbished building is well designed, spacious and equipped to support a wide range of stimulating activities. The excellent outdoor provision is terraced and filled with exciting areas for pupils to explore, including a large boat, planted areas, tents and chicanes for the wheeled adventurers. The children are effectively supervised as they follow their interests, sometimes pursuing an idea through modelling in the craft area, or incorporating their digital photographs into a slide show, or quietly studying a book then playing the role of a character or scene that has caught their imagination. Their ability to follow through their ideas and to sustain their involvement in a task they have decided to undertake is remarkable for their age. Those learning English as an additional language make very good progress in listening and understanding the language, and good progress in their speaking.

This high quality learning in an apparently informal setting, is underpinned by outstanding teaching, careful observation and a thorough knowledge of individual children. The checks on what each child knows and can do on entry to the nursery are systematically built on through the daily observations of their learning and needs. Key workers have responsibility for specific groups of children and they all share their observations at frequent meetings to discuss the progress and next stage of each child's learning across the Foundation Stage curriculum. These meetings and informal discussions also provide an effective means of using the full range of expertise in the staff team to moderate these assessments before recording each child's attainment on the electronic tracking system. This knowledge of the children's needs provides the basis for the detailed planning of their experiences, whether in the focused teaching of specific groups or through the activities chosen by the children. Staff are exceptionally skilful at recognising when to intervene to develop a child's understanding without interfering with the child's own investigations. Children are confident that any of the staff will know them and help, and are capable of making decisions about when they need assistance. The teaching methods are very effective in promoting language learning for bilingual and English speaking children. Bilingual staff, although limited in number, are very effective.

The independence and opportunities for making choices and decisions that are fundamental to the nursery's organisation of children's learning enable the children to make outstanding progress in their personal development. They choose equipment, tidy away, look after their clothing, know how to share and can work together as well as pursue their own ideas. They are remarkably well behaved. Their good care for each other is particularly evident in the affectionate contact they make with the small number of children who have severe disabilities.

Outstanding leadership and management, especially by the experienced headteacher and governors, have set high expectations and clear direction during the challenging development into the Children's Centre. Staff very skilfully manage their own responsibilities and enable the high quality environment for learning to run with smooth efficiency and effectiveness. The

arrangements for governance are working very well, with suitable plans to extend representation further. The capacity to improve is very good.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Increase bilingual support when funding and opportunities allow.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Achievement is outstanding. Most children enter with attainment below that expected for three-year-olds, with poor development in social, mathematics and language skills, although a few are very competent for their age. The rapid progress made by children at different stages of learning is mainly due to the stimulating opportunities they all get to develop their skills and understanding, while adults constantly check and encourage them to be more ambitious. Achievement across the ability range is readily recognised by staff, such as the child with multiple disabilities whose first word was "wow" and the capable bilingual child whose first attempt to speak in a group was surprisingly competent. Although the attainment of individual children varies, by the time they transfer to Reception classes most reach the expected levels and a significant minority exceed these, especially in their personal development, aspects of mathematics and creative skills including painting and modelling.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Children's personal development is outstanding. Their enthusiasm for attending is reflected in the nursery's good attendance record and in the parents' examples of their child's reluctance to leave at the end of sessions and requests to attend in holidays and weekends. Behaviour is very good and pupils trust adults to keep them safe. A key to the good progress children make is the exceptional degree of independence that is encouraged. The children know about health and safety and every day are able to make decisions based on what they know. They are sensible about the use of tools and the choice of a safe place to work depending on the activity they have chosen. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. They consider how their actions affect others, and have the confidence to express their needs, such as when a child quietly studying a book asked a nearby group who had noisily returned from the outdoor classroom to 'be quiet please, I'm reading'. They relish physical activity and frequently choose to be outside. Their future well-being is effectively supported by their personal skills and their knowledge.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

The approach to teaching and learning is demanding but outstandingly successful. The nursery's aim to ensure that all children achieve as well as they can is met through a combination of very good relationships with pupils, rigorous and frequent checks on progress, and perceptive observations of individuals followed quickly by detailed planning for the next stage of their progress. Where the teaching excels is in the discussions about individual pupils' progress and needs which result in all the staff knowing the pupils well, and the key workers knowing their group of children exceptionally well. This results in every child being able to work productively

with every adult, either for casual help such as asking why babies can't eat pizza when preparing a meal in the domestic play area, or sustaining an in-depth conversation about why some boats float and some sink during modelling. The good balance of specific teaching to small groups alongside the children's own exploration and investigations builds well on their reading and mathematical skills as well as their more general knowledge.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The planning of the curriculum follows the national guidance for the Foundation Stage curriculum. This has been used very well to create a curriculum that provides an outstanding experience for children so they develop as well as they can, whatever their advantages or difficulties. The refurbishment of the building was undertaken with a clear view of how the curriculum was to be put into practice, including good space for children with mobility aids and a smooth flow from outdoors to indoors. The exciting resources capture children's imagination and help to generate ideas for investigations, creative activities and conversations, and an understanding of the natural environment. Some simple resources are used to great effect, such as when a group of children at the early stages of learning English helped their bilingual teacher to wash the school's minibus, quickly learning the meaning of words such as sponge, dripping, squeezing and sometimes incorporating these into their own speech.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Parents rightly praise the high quality care and support their children receive. The children's justified belief that they are successful owes much to the excellent individual guidance and support they receive for their personal and academic development. They know that they can learn from mistakes, which is very perceptive for children of their age. The school takes good care of their safety. The building is kept secure, government requirements for safeguarding are met, the staff are trained and knowledgeable about child protection. Arrangements for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are outstanding, such as those for a child with a significant visual impairment who was on a sofa enjoying reading with his teacher from a choice of favourite books. Most of these have been made by the staff to give ample tactile clues so the story could be followed easily; the choice also included popular books, such as *The Bear Hunt* which had been adapted to include Braille strips on each page. The familiar tale quickly attracted other children to join the child in the pleasure of the story.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The leadership and management are excellent. The consistent vision of how children's learning is most effectively developed, given the wide range of ability and needs, and taking account of the communities' beliefs and preferences, owes much to the outstanding leadership and experience of the headteacher. Recent developments in planning have been ably supported by the new deputy. The governors share the aspirations, are well informed and have provided exceptionally good partnership and support, being prepared to suggest and criticise as well as preserving with the administrative challenges of incorporating a school into a Children's Centre. Self-evaluation is very good, and well based on the views of all those involved in the school. The staff have successfully committed themselves to good quality training and to some changes

in their ways of working; they manage their responsibilities very well and make a major contribution to children's success. Close relationships with other agencies, such as those for hearing and visual impairment, add to the expertise of the high quality staff team. The school has made excellent improvement since the last inspection.

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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	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	1
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**

16 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Fairfield Nursery School, Lancashire, BB5 0LD

Thank you for helping me when I came to see you. You showed me how well you could look after yourselves and how much you enjoyed your nursery. You have a very good nursery. You told me you liked coming every day and were very pleased you were able to have so many things to do. I heard you laughing a lot. Many of you wanted me to see the things you had made and helped me to see how carefully you had thought about what paper, paint and other equipment you needed. You are good at making choices.

You are also very well behaved, and look after each other whenever you can. You have lots of friends who you know will help you. Your parents are very proud of you, and know you are learning very well. Your teachers are always looking out for you and are very good at helping you to learn.

Some of you can speak in your family's language and now you are just beginning to learn to speak in English. I think you learn very quickly, especially when your teacher also speaks your family language as well as English. I know your headteacher and governors will help you as much as they can.

Best wishes to everyone and thank you for my lovely day.

Mrs Barnes

Lead inspector