

Basnett Street Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119101
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	291318
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Lynne Read

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	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	80
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Councillor Stephen Large
Headteacher	Mrs Maureen Ivers
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2002
School address	Basnett Street Burnley Lancashire BB10 3ES
Telephone number	01282 457235
Fax number	01282 457257

Age group	3–4
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves an ethnically diverse community in an urban area of Burnley. It offers part-time places for children over the age of three. When they enter the Nursery, children's development is around that usually expected for the age group. The majority of pupils are of White British, Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage; around 40% are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school offers additional playgroup places, together with lunchtime and after-school clubs. These are provided through a non profit making company, run and managed voluntarily by school personnel.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Basnett Street Nursery provides a good education for children. The school has some outstanding features. It provides good value for money. The judgements match those made in the school's own accurate evaluation of its performance. The nursery has a good reputation within the area and parents commend the standard of learning and care. One wrote, 'The staff are supportive and easy to talk to.' Another commented, 'My child enjoys coming to Nursery and has learned a lot since he has been here.' The nursery has established excellent partnerships with other schools and community agencies that extend children's experiences and support their learning extremely well. For example, family and community members support learning on a day-to-day basis.

Progress is at least good across the six areas of learning and excellent in personal and social education. By the end of the year, many children have exceeded the expectations for their age, and achieved a broad foundation on which to build their future education. Children learn well because the teaching is good. Tasks are organised around themes with different activities each day. This captures children's interests very well. Progress is constantly assessed and adults use the information effectively to plan the next steps. Children work well in the small, adult-directed sessions and make good progress. However, when children are organised into large teaching groups with a wide range of needs and fewer opportunities for interaction, progress is satisfactory. In creative and physical work and in understanding the world, children learn well because adults skilfully guide them in their choice of activity to ensure a balance of experiences. The bi-lingual assistants provide sensitive support in mother tongue to ensure that new vocabulary and concepts are understood.

Personal development is a strength. Behaviour is excellent; children thoroughly enjoy their learning and most persevere with tasks. This prepares them extremely well for their future education and results in a very pleasant and purposeful nursery atmosphere. Children are well informed about healthy living; they take good advantage of opportunities for exercise, indoors and out and enjoy 'healthy snacks'. They learn about each others' faiths and cultures and celebrate a variety of festivals throughout the year. This supports the harmonious community feel in school.

Improvement since the previous inspection is good. Under the very good leadership of the headteacher, the school is constantly moving forwards. The extended services have proved to be very popular with families; they help to prepare children for their nursery education and provide additional social experiences. School development planning focuses on any relative weakness identified through the assessment and analysis of children's progress. Attention to safety issues, including checking on the suitability of staff and helpers, is extremely thorough. The school has a good capacity to improve even further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that group work is consistently organised to meet the needs of all children.
- Provide the best possible opportunities for interaction and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Progress is good for boys and girls and it is excellent in personal skills. By the time children transfer to their Reception classes, their development exceeds that expected for the age group.

Children develop excellent skills of independent learning and are confident to try out new things. This prepares them well for the next steps in their education. Progress in communication, language and literacy is good with especially good skills in early writing. In a few instances, however, progress is satisfactory because when children are organised into large groups, the opportunities for adults to intervene in or extend learning are restricted. By the end of the year, the majority of those learning English as an additional language are able to take full advantage of their lessons. Mathematical understanding develops well. Children work with numbers, shapes and patterns confidently.

Physical and creative development progresses at a good pace. Children's creativity and imagination are seen in their artwork and role play. They develop good attitudes to exercise and demonstrate good control and dexterity. Children's natural curiosity is harnessed through a varied range of opportunities to observe and ask questions. As a result, they investigate what interests them and find their own answers. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported and make very good progress. The more able pupils have a good level of challenge and do well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development, is outstanding and a strength of the school. Children thoroughly enjoy coming to nursery and this is reflected in the excitement they show on arrival and the exceptionally confident way in which they part from their parents and carers. Attendance is good. Behaviour is outstanding and at this early age children show exceptional consideration for others and share readily. They follow the routines and high expectations that their teachers have of them. For example, children tidy away quickly when asked, and organise themselves for the following session. This helps them to prepare for later school routines and adult life.

Children explain the importance of healthy eating and exercise and enjoy fruit at lunchtimes. They work and play happily within this very safe and secure environment. Most express their likes and dislikes clearly and staff take note of their opinions when planning activities. For example, children are fully consulted on the continuing development of the outdoor areas. Children develop a good sense of community awareness through theme work, such as 'people who help us'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good because staff have good expertise; they know what young children need and learning is well planned to include exciting play activities. Adults constantly engage with children, questioning, promoting discussion and encouraging them to explore. However, when children are organised into larger groups, teaching is less effective in meeting

the wide variety of needs. Interventions from the bi-lingual staff accelerate progress for those at an early stage of learning English and extend their confidence.

Parents are encouraged to be partners in the learning process and take good advantage of the book and toy loan facility. They are kept well informed of their children's progress through written reports, formal and informal discussions and the sharing of children's 'next steps' or targets. Each child has a detailed record of achievement, which goes home on a regular basis. The photographs, notes and certificates provide a clear picture of their learning.

Staff continually assess the children's progress and the information is used to plan tasks and challenges for each individual. They ensure a good balance of experiences by gently steering children into trying new activities within the free choice sessions. The provision for children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very good. The school goes to great lengths to secure expertise or resources needed to meet specific needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Good planning links activities around a common theme so that learning is constantly reinforced. All children have access to a wide range of experiences to help them develop enquiring minds and good concentration.

There is a good balance between sessions that staff lead and activities that children choose for themselves. The nursery is working on developing the curriculum to take full advantage of the new, open-plan learning areas. The extensive outdoor area is used creatively to promote physical and social development and to explore the environment. Computers and the electronic whiteboard are in constant use so children are able to select and control programs confidently. Social and health education is covered very well and adapted to the needs of young children. For example, dental care is taught in an interesting way through the 'Smiling for Life' project.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Overall, this area is good and care for children is excellent. All required child protection and safeguarding procedures are in place. Parents commend the standard of care. One wrote, 'My child is happy due to the caring staff and the lovely environment.' Excellent introduction and settling in arrangements are made at the start of nursery and very good links with primary schools ensure that children have a smooth transition to full time education. Key adults are allocated to work with small groups of children. This leads to excellent relationships and ensures that each child's progress is closely monitored. At the welcoming and secure hand-over sessions, parents take good advantage of the informal opportunities to discuss issues or ask questions.

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. There is scope, however, to refer more frequently to planned learning targets during sessions in order to keep children's attention focused and allow the celebration of successes.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has an excellent overview of provision and children's achievement. She has been central to the development of the extended services and the refurbishment of the accommodation by seeking external funding. Through a joint management structure, the headteacher influences planning, organisation and management of the extended provision. As a result, there is much continuity for the young children moving from play group to nursery or for those who attend both. The outstanding caring ethos in the nursery is shared by all staff who work enthusiastically to ensure that children have equal access to all activities.

Staff work as a strong team and support the headteacher well. They monitor learning closely in their key worker groups and contribute to improvement planning. Evaluations of performance are often completed at staff meetings. This provides a very good training opportunity for the staff who are less experienced in management procedures and allows good sharing of information and views. The school takes very good account of parents' views and many returned questionnaires commend the open communication between school and home. The governors support the headteacher well and are actively involved in aspects of school life. Governance is good.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
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

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.

Annex A

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	2
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	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

18 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Basnett Street Nursery School, Burnley, BB10 3ES

I had a lovely time in your Nursery. Thank you for showing me all the exciting things you do. I really like the way you all stay so busy, are very happy and get on with each other so well. Your teachers plan lots of interesting tasks. You were very keen to find out about your tadpoles and caterpillars when I visited. There was a lot of fun and laughter during your 'sticky kids' session when you exercised really hard.

I think your early language and mathematical skills are coming along well and I was impressed with the number of shapes that you can recognise and describe. You are also doing well at controlling pencils, making interesting pictures and models and finding out about your world. Most of the time, you work on your own, with a friend, in small groups or with a teacher helping you. This is when you make the best progress. Sometimes, for example in story time, you work in a large group where you have to wait longer for a turn to get involved so do not learn as quickly. Your teachers are going to look at ways of using the improved space in your nursery to avoid these big groups.

Your parents told me lots about the nursery and they like the way that you are learning important things that will help you when you start school. I know that they enjoy looking at your photograph gallery and hearing from you about your day's work.

Thank you for those lovely smiles you gave me and for letting me join in with your games and activities. Keep up the hard work and good luck for the future. I hope that you all continue to enjoy your learning journey as you move into your next schools.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lynne Read

Lead inspector