

# Crossens Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104845
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sefton
<b>Inspection number</b>	308683
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clare Henderson

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>	3–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	70
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs L Jenkins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs S Gilbertson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 October 2003
<b>School address</b>	Roselea Drive Southport Merseyside PR9 8ND
<b>Telephone number</b>	01704 228624
<b>Fax number</b>	01704 228624

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Crossens Nursery School is larger than average. It caters for children from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. Many children attending live in Crossens, a village to the north end of Southport, although a few travel from further afield to attend this popular school. Almost all are White British. A below average proportion have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children are admitted at the start of the term following their third birthday. They attend either morning or afternoon sessions. The school has the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Healthy Schools and Eco Bronze Awards. The nursery school is to relocate to a new site in a new purpose built building in September 2008.

## 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 school that provides excellent value for money. There are significant strengths, not least the inspirational leadership of the headteacher and children's outstanding personal development that reflects the excellent quality of care, guidance and support they receive. It successfully provides children with a creative and imaginative start to their education. This view is borne out by parents who are delighted with the school's work. They make comments such as, 'My children are privileged to attend this highly valued school' and 'It's fun, friendly and the children have lots and lots to be interested in.'

The school has continued to make excellent progress since the previous inspection, which found all aspects to be very good. It has particularly forged ahead with the development of children's writing skills, which were identified as an area for improvement. Although the school knows itself well and has made excellent improvement since its last inspection, it has been overly modest in judging itself to be good rather than outstanding.

Achievement is outstanding. Most children begin the Nursery with skills typical for their age. The majority reach standards that are above national expectations in all areas of their learning by the time they move on to full-time education. This is a result of the excellent quality of teaching they receive. Much of their learning is focused on independent and spontaneous exploration in an excellent indoor and outdoor environment. As a result, children discover that learning is an exciting activity that stems from their own experience. The lively teaching meets the needs of all children very effectively. The curriculum is carefully planned to stimulate children's imagination, to develop their language, communication and problem-solving skills and is enriched by a wide programme of visits and visitors which strengthen children's personal development very well.

Links with parents, the community and neighbouring colleges and schools are excellent. Relationships between adults and children are exemplary so that children's self-esteem is continuously raised. They are encouraged to develop their curiosity and understanding of how to stay healthy and safe. Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the work of the school and has been instrumental in motivating all staff to work as an effective team. Excellent systems are in place for observing and recording children's attainment on a day-to-day basis. Although governors provide good support and commitment to the school, such as in the planning for the forthcoming move to the new school building, they are insufficiently involved in tracking children's progress.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

As the school only has children aged three to four years, there is no requirement to complete this section. The report covers, in full, the first year of the Foundation Stage.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen governors' involvement in the tracking of children's progress.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

From broadly expected skills for their age, children make outstanding progress so that standards are above national expectations by the time they leave and go on to Reception. This positive beginning makes an important contribution to their future education. The highly imaginative, lively and highly innovative curriculum with exciting indoor and outdoor classrooms are very important factors in children's outstanding achievement. Most significant of all is children's excellent progress in their personal and social skills that creates a solid foundation for all their learning. The school's assessment information shows that all children had reached high standards when they left last summer. Progress is also rapid in all areas of learning, such as problem solving, language and literacy development. This is because children are given continuous opportunities to learn through play. They make very good progress in their use of information and communication technology (ICT). This is evident in the confidence they show when using computers independently and cameras to make simple films.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Children's personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. Their smiling faces, as they enthusiastically set about their activities, are testament to how much they enjoy school. 'I love everything here', is a typical comment. They say they feel safe and happy and know to go to a teacher if they feel upset. Their behaviour is excellent and attendance is good. Children share their activities happily with others, ready to give someone else the chance to have a go, for example, on the interactive smart-board and they are able to explain the importance of taking turns. Their independence and initiative develop quickly. Children take responsibilities very seriously. For example, planting herbs and flowers helps them to make important contributions to their community while protecting the local environment. Children's readiness to wash their hands and eat fruit at snack time shows a rapidly expanding understanding of the importance of good hygiene and diet. A wide range of visitors, including artists, engineers, police and road safety officers introduce the children, in a fun and exciting way, to the world of work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Excellent teaching and learning are characterised by a constant focus on encouraging children's social skills and independence. Children respond extremely well to this approach so that, with or without direct adult supervision, they are always motivated and busy. Conversation with children is frequent, friendly and sensitive. All staff make full use of every opportunity to extend children's language as a way to further their development in all the areas of their learning. This is especially true in the outdoor classroom, where, through role play undertaken enthusiastically in rain or shine, children's creative, physical and communication skills are developed exceptionally well. The staff make learning enjoyable by ensuring that there is a broad range of activities that suits children's interests and promotes their independence.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

Creative, innovative and exciting activities based securely on the children's interests and needs are central to their outstanding curriculum. Children enjoy the highly stimulating activities and acquire self-confidence and a strong desire to learn. The outside classroom has a host of different sensory experiences and opportunities for physical exercise. Resources indoors and out are varied, plentiful and safe. Staff constantly review and plan the curriculum to ensure that learning is child led but with adult input where appropriate. Adults support and help children's learning and personal development by providing an excellent range of visits and visitors. These experiences give children many opportunities to explore and extend their skills. This was particularly evident in ICT, art, design, music and the opportunity for children to learn to speak Spanish. Recycling projects give children a strong sense of their responsibilities to the wider community.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Promoting children's welfare and personal development lies at the heart of the school's work. Such is its success that children settle extremely quickly into school routines. Arrangements to safeguard children and to assess risk are all in place. Rigorous checks on absence ensure good attendance. Comprehensive observations and assessments of children's achievements help adults to match activities precisely to children's needs. There is skilful support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This includes setting focused targets, extremely strong links with outside agencies and formal checks with parents on the quality of provision. Parents speak highly of the courses the school has initiated which 'help me to help my child in their learning'. All staff provide opportunities for children to explore the next steps in their learning with enjoyment and delight.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher successfully motivates all staff and has extremely high expectations. The teamwork is exceptional. All staff respond enthusiastically and make a significant contribution to the excellent leadership and management of the school and, in particular, the management of the curriculum. Everyone gives of their best and subject areas are successfully led, ensuring that new ideas and initiatives are put into practice, so helping to sustain continuous improvement. Checks on children's progress are ongoing and effective. The school is rigorous in its self-evaluation and is mostly accurate, if somewhat modest. The school knows clearly what it needs to do to achieve its aim for all children to enjoy their learning. Performance management is used well and is closely linked to raising children's achievement. The governors are an important element of the effective team approach and fulfil their responsibilities well. Their involvement in tracking children's progress is, however, less well developed.

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

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

<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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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 Crossens Nursery School, Southport, PR9 8ND

I really enjoyed my visit to your school. I had a lovely time and your smiling faces showed me that you really enjoy coming to your nursery. I watched you make lots of exciting things like the smoothies and the rockets and saw how you learn how important it is to eat healthy food and to get plenty of exercise. I could see you doing lots of fun things when you played in your outside area. I noticed that, even when it was raining, you were still very happy to play outside. You did have a good time!

I came to see if you like your nursery and how well everyone helps you learn and grow up. I agreed with you and your mums, dads and helpers and found your nursery to be one of the very best I have visited.

All the grown-ups work hard for you. They help you to find out new things while having fun. You are looked after really well too. I could see that you are learning to tidy up after yourselves and to look after each other. Well done!

I have asked for one thing to be done to make your nursery even better.

- Some of the people who help to run the school could find out more about how much you are learning during your time in the nursery.

I hope you carry on enjoying your time in your nursery.