

# Howard Street Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105757
<b>Local Authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	308942
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ann Welch

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	52
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Lynda Barlow
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 November 2003
<b>School address</b>	Howard Street Rochdale Lancashire OL12 0PP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 646103
<b>Fax number</b>	0

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<b>Age group</b>	3–5
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Howard Street Nursery has developed its services for young children and their families into a fully integrated Children's Centre. This small nursery is located in an area of high social deprivation and children who attend, on a part-time basis, come from mixed backgrounds. Almost 70% have English as an additional language. Also, 20% of the children have specific speech and language difficulties. A small group of children are from asylum seekers' families. At the end of their Nursery year, children transfer to many different schools.

## 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 school. The attention paid to children's individual needs is excellent and promotes outstanding achievement in both their academic and personal development. It is led by a headteacher who sets the right direction for the school and inspires others to follow. 'The nursery is a fantastic foundation for the children, the headteacher and staff are excellent,' is a sentiment reflected by many parents.

From starting points that are much lower than those typical for their age, children make outstanding progress to reach the expected levels for their age in most areas of learning. Fewer children are on track to reach age-related expectations in communication, language and literacy, and mathematics because their starting point is much lower in these areas of learning. The number of children who are at an early stage of speaking English or have significant speech and language difficulties is well above average. That they achieve such outstanding results is testament to teaching that is consistently excellent. Staff use their considerable expertise to gain a thorough understanding of each child's needs and circumstances. Staff are very good at capturing and holding children's interest. They use a wide range of strategies and activities to make every day exciting. Children love using their imagination during role play and benefit from expert adult intervention which extends their learning experience without taking over, for example, establishing routines for weighing the 'babies' at the 'Health Centre'.

Personal development is outstanding because the school's ethos focuses on their social and emotional well-being as well as their academic development. Children have complete trust in the adults to look after them and to sort out any problems. They behave exceptionally well whatever the context, for example, when expected to listen to an adult and when not immediately supervised. They are given many opportunities to use their initiative, make choices, share and take turns. Children from different cultural backgrounds play harmoniously. The outstanding curriculum is based on purposeful, practical activities both indoors and out, that stimulates children's curiosity and enables them to work with sustained interest. The school extends learning beyond the classroom with many visits and visitors. Regular visits to a local nature park help them to find out about the natural world from first-hand experiences.

The excellent care and guidance given to all are two of the many reasons for the school's high reputation in the locality. Children flourish in the nursery because staff appreciate their varying needs and their differing home circumstances. Before a child starts all measures are taken to ensure that staff are fully aware of his or her particular needs and that the nursery is ready to accommodate them and to ensure continuity with home. Children love coming each day secure in the knowledge that they will be made to feel special. This contributes to their sense of belonging and self-esteem.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher has provided excellent guidance and vision for some time. Her vision is embraced and acted upon by everyone in the nursery. The headteacher works very well with the class teacher who provides good levels of support in terms of leadership and management. Governors are effective in supporting the school as well as providing the right levels of challenge. There is no sense of complacency and senior leaders expect the best from themselves and everyone. The school faces an exciting future. It embraces willingly the prospect of serving the community better as a fully integrated Children's Centre. It provides excellent value for money.

## **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**

This outstanding school has an extremely clear view of how it can improve. These improvements are set out in the school improvement plan and there are no additional measures necessary beyond this plan.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Many children start school with skills and abilities that are much lower than those typical for their age, particularly in communication. Intensive training for all staff in helping children to develop their language skills has ensured that they do a tremendous job supporting children who have English as an additional language and those who have particular language difficulties. It also ensures that achievement is outstanding. Children's confidence in speaking increases rapidly because adults take every opportunity to talk to them and encourage them to interact with one another. Due to the excellent relationships that adults establish with them, together with the rich experiences provided, children's personal, social and emotional development is rapid. This supports their overall achievement very well so that most are working within the expectations for their age in most areas of learning by the time they leave.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Children greatly enjoy school and their attendance is good. Some even forget to say goodbye to their parents, so eager are they to make a start. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Through judicious use of encouragement and praise, levels of self-esteem are high. Children's behaviour is outstanding. They understand that abiding by the simple rules makes life more enjoyable for everyone. Children very quickly learn to celebrate different cultures in the community around them, for example, enjoying the celebrations at the end of Eid. Snack times are very pleasant and social occasions when children practise their good table manners as they choose from a selection of nutritious foods. They have a good understanding of the need for hygiene and why they must wash their hands before eating. They relish the opportunities for exercise and to let off steam outdoors. Through role play and practical situations they are developing excellent basic skills that set them up very well for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Excellent teaching and learning are characterised by clear routines and the wide variety of interesting activities, which support all areas of learning. All staff have a deep understanding of how young children learn. This is applied skilfully to meet the needs of each child. This level of individual attention works exceptionally well for children with language difficulties and those

learning English as an additional language. Both groups are set precise, achievable goals and given carefully targeted support to help achieve them. In some activities, children are grouped according to their ability and are challenged more robustly. Key workers, including bi-lingual ones, give valuable support in all activities. They know when to step back and encourage independence and when to intervene to take the learning further. Planning allows for a perfect balance between adult-guided and child-selected activities. Resources are extremely well organised with much to catch the children's attention. Adults' enjoyment in teaching is evident and reflected in the lengths they go to in supporting individuals so that they can meet with success.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

Staff have an impressive knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and this ensures that all areas of learning are covered. Children have plenty of opportunities to gain skills as emerging readers and writers. They begin to develop early notions of shape and number, for example, by playing with construction apparatus, sorting activities and singing counting songs. Projects link several areas of learning to promote children's thinking, creativity and problem-solving activities. There was much discussion and trial and error before children were satisfied with their 'mortar' as they attempted to build a wall with real bricks. Creative and physical activities abound and children see these as part of their natural day. A good range of visits is undertaken, for example, walks into Rochdale Town Centre and coach trips to the theatre. These ensure that children develop a love of learning as well as an understanding of the cultural heritage of the area.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Warm and trusting relationships are at the heart of the excellent care and support found within the nursery. Key workers know the children exceptionally well because their tracking of progress and records of achievements are detailed and accurate. This information guides planning and changes are made if it is noted that a child requires extra help or needs to be challenged further. The nursery's partnership with local external agencies is excellent and ensures that children and families receive immediate help when needed. Parents speak highly of the courses the school has been instrumental in providing and their feedback indicates that many see a significant improvement in family life as a result of attending. Procedures for safeguarding children, including health and safety meet national requirements.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher sets exactly the right direction for the school and inspires others to follow. She has high expectations of what children can achieve, academically and pastorally, despite their low starting point. The distribution of leadership and management roles has improved since the last inspection and is allowing for the professional development of teaching staff and enabling them to contribute to the school's evaluation and improvement. The team already has a very good track record in making improvements, including raising standards for more able children, transforming the outdoor provision and improving systems to monitor the overall effectiveness of the nursery. Close analysis of data leads to an accurate view of performance,

albeit a little modest at times and this, in turn, leads to effective action to secure improvements. The total commitment of all the staff is a strength. Roles are interchangeable and everyone is involved in all aspects of provision. With so many strengths, the school's capacity to improve and to manage the changes involved in the continuing development of the Children's Centre is excellent.

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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 Howard Street Nursery School, Rochdale, OL12 0PP

Thank you for making my recent visit to your nursery so enjoyable. I had a lovely time and wished I could have stayed longer. Thank you for showing me your Year Book of photographs and telling me all about what you were doing in them. I think you were right about the Spider Hunt being exciting and didn't you do well eating the Chinese food with chopsticks? I think your nursery is super, one of the finest I have visited.

I will tell you what I liked best. You all want to come to the nursery and your parents are pleased with your work. You behave very well and play together beautifully, taking turns, sharing toys and making friends. All the grown ups know you very well and work really, really hard to take care of you and to help you to do your best. They think of lots of exciting things for you to do. I could see that you are learning to tidy up after yourselves and to look after each other. Well done!

I hope you all carry on enjoying your school and you have my very best wishes for the future.