

# Stoneygate Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119083
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	313177
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Dave Byrne

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	87
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Marie Steele
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Julie Morrow
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 April 2005
<b>School address</b>	Stoneygate Walk Preston Lancashire PR1 3XU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01772 257865
<b>Fax number</b>	01772 257865

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the provision for the more able children
- the impact on achievement of the school's efforts to involve parents in their children's education
- the quality of the curriculum and the impact of care, guidance and support on children's development.

Evidence was gathered from the school's own assessment data and other school documentation, observations of teaching and learning, the way that pupils interact with each other and their response to what is provided for them, parents' questionnaires and discussions with staff. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail. The inspector found that almost all of the judgements made in the school's self-evaluation form were justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is an inner city school. The school is commissioned by the local authority to provide an extensive range of children's centre services which include support for families and day care for children. The school is well established in the community and plays an active part in developing children's centre services across the city. The majority of children come from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds and most have English as an additional language. A significant number have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school currently provides a small number of full-time places for autistic children of nursery age.

## 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. At the core of its work is a total commitment and dedication to the welfare of the children and their community. Links with families, the local community and professional agencies are excellent. They are significant factors in the excellent achievement and outstanding progress made by children. Parents and carers hold the school in high regard and many say they are proud that their child attends it. One parent summed up the views of the vast majority by stating that, 'The school has had a very positive influence on my daughter's learning and the progress she has made'.

Children love coming to school. Almost every child arrives with a smiling face and quickly gets involved in the rich and exciting range of activities provided. Each child is thought of as being unique. Teaching assistants and teachers are a strong team. Staff are carefully selected and very well managed so that a wide range of skills are available for children. The needs of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well met and where bilingual support is required, this too is provided from within the team. More able children are identified and the school is in the process of developing strategies to extend their learning even further. Children become increasingly independent, interested and motivated in their learning. This is because resources are exceptionally attractive and accessible and there is always an adult to turn to.

After starting school with skills which are below what is typical for their age, with many having a poor grasp of English and a number with emotional difficulties, children make excellent progress. Those with English as an additional language make particularly good progress and catch up in their knowledge and understanding of English. When they leave the school for full-time education elsewhere, the large majority of children have reached levels typical for their age. Given their relatively low starting points, this is outstanding achievement.

Everyone working in the school has a passion for improving the life chances of the children. Very strong links with parents and carers have been developed by staff working with families in the community. Parenting courses, play therapy sessions and initiatives such as 'Physi-kids' encourage parents and carers to have the confidence to help their child at home and support what goes on in school. Excellent links with the St Augustine's New Avenham Centre extends the school's influence further into the community.

The quality of teaching and learning is excellent. There is a very good understanding of the needs of the children. Excellent assessments of children enable activities to be planned to meet individual needs. Different aspects of learning are linked together very well, and staff take every opportunity to develop language and mathematical skills. There is an excellent balance between giving children focused teaching with a key worker and then encouraging this learning to be developed through play. Learning is fun, the classrooms and outdoor areas have a myriad of stimulating, attractive resources which inspire children. The curriculum is lively, inspiring and carefully planned to enable children to make rapid progress in each aspect of their development.

At all times, children feel safe and secure. The school is meticulous in maintaining security and ensuring that all safeguarding procedures are in place. Children who have emotional difficulties and need extra support are cared for by skilled and dedicated staff. Good resources, such as a sensory room, add to the options for helping such children.

The children's cultural backgrounds are valued and the diversity is embraced and celebrated. As a result, relationships amongst children are warm and friendly and everyone feels valued.

Behaviour is excellent and even when a lack of English hinders communication, children still get involved in learning and make friends. It was a delight to see children from different cultures playing so well together with construction kits, even though their language was not understood by each other. Children learn how to live healthily by, for example, eating fruit and enjoying outdoor play and experiencing the excellent school garden. Children are very well prepared for their move to full-time school.

The school is so good because of the excellent leadership and management of the headteacher. The needs of children, parents and carers and the community are at the heart of all that the headteacher does. She works tirelessly to nurture, support and cajole all associated with the school. A very effective senior management team has been created which has skilfully built on and improved the school since the last inspection. There is an excellent system for keeping an eye on the school's development, which values the opinions of staff, parents and governors. As a result of such consultations, coupled with excellent information on children's achievement and progress, the school knows itself very well. There is a very clear focus on getting the best possible achievement from children and a determination to do so. Actions in the last two years have raised the achievement of some groups who could do better, for example White children and some Pakistani and Bengali children. Next on the agenda is to get better achievement from boys, who currently lag behind girls. The resolve of the headteacher and staff constantly to improve the school, and its excellent track record in doing so, gives the school excellent potential for continued improvement in the future. The governing body are very supportive of the school and make sure that all finances are wisely spent to get the best value from the budget.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

As a nursery school, the Foundation Stage is completely covered by the Overall effectiveness section.

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

- There are no areas for improvement other than those already identified within the school improvement plan.

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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	3
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	3
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	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**

14 May 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Stoneygate Nursery School, Lancashire, PR1 3XU

I really had a good time when I inspected your school. You have a great time there. I wish I could have stayed longer and explored all of the fun activities you have.

What a fantastic place your nursery is! Your parents and carers like it because you are safe and well looked after, learn many new things and enjoy yourselves. Please thank your parents and carers for filling in the questionnaire for me.

You like coming to school. I saw your happy faces and smiles and heard how much you laugh. I saw you building castles with bricks, sharing fun in the sandpit and exploring red strawberry-smelling water! You all behave very well and help each other when help is needed.

Your teachers are so caring and do all they can to help you. They make sure you are very safe and give you so many exciting things to do. You are all learning very well and should be quite happy when you move to the big school after the summer.

I hope you always enjoy school and help others when they need it.

I send you all my best wishes.

Dave Byrne

Lead inspector