

Greenacre Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104848
Local Authority	Sefton
Inspection number	324116
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Paul Bamber

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	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	56
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D Barrington
Headteacher	Mrs Lesley Utley
Date of previous school inspection	10 May 2006
School address	Province Place Bootle Merseyside L20 6PJ
Telephone number	0151 933 9115
Fax number	0151 933 9115

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This smaller than average sized Nursery school is located in an area that has considerably more social and economic disadvantage than normal. The vast majority of children are White British. Very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is above average. There are a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities whose places are funded by the local authority. Children enter the Nursery in the term following their third birthday. Most children attend either the morning or afternoon session, but up to 10 attend both. These children are looked after by the school during lunchtime. The Nursery has Investors in People status and the Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This Nursery provides its children with an outstanding start to their education. Children thoroughly enjoy playing and learning in a stimulating and extremely safe environment and this is reflected in the way they love coming to school. Parents say how much they appreciate the very high quality of care and support provided for the little ones and their families. The outstanding overall provision is the result of excellent leadership and management. Leaders and managers have been too modest in their evaluation of provision. Overall, children enter with skills below those expected for their age. In some crucial areas, such as in their mathematical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world around them, their skills are very limited. Children make excellent progress overall. They make the very best progress personally, socially and emotionally and in their physical and creative development. When they leave the Nursery, most children enter Reception classes with skills that are at least in line with expectations and sometimes above. The pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress because of the school's provision.

The excellent progress children make is due to the very skilful way in which they are taught and encouraged to develop their skills across all areas of their learning. Staff are acutely aware of their needs because they rigorously assess children's progress on a day-to-day basis and use these assessments astutely to plan activities that promote children's development. As yet, the way in which children's next steps are identified is not sufficiently systematic to ensure that all staff, not just key workers, are fully aware of individual children's needs. Children immensely enjoy learning and they get on with each other very well. Most soon learn that taking turns and listening to each other is what works best, so that they all have a chance to share resources and for their ideas and views to be heard. They play indoors and outdoors cooperatively and independently with the minimum of fuss or upset. For example, one child finished a tour of the 'outdoor road' on his bike, dismounted and said to another 'it's your turn now'. Staff respect children's preferences to play independently, and they develop their confidence and independence by not expecting them to join in activities straight away. This reassures children that it is normal to learn in different ways or to join in at different times.

The loving way in which the children are looked after and supported plays a very significant role in their excellent personal and emotional development and to the quality of their learning. This is the case for all children but particularly for those who are the most vulnerable. Children are skilfully encouraged to prepare and eat healthy snacks, to develop appropriate personal hygiene habits and to become self-confident and independent.

The headteacher provides excellent leadership. Experienced and wise in the ways and needs of young children, she leads by example, promotes very close teamwork and is highly respected by the governors, parents and the local community. Her work as the school's special educational needs coordinator puts her at the forefront of the school's very successful drive to include all children in everything the school offers and to meet closely their very diverse needs. Her team of skilful teachers and their assistants live up to her expectations to provide high quality provision. The school has improved very well since the last inspection and has an excellent capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Identify more systematically and inform all staff more formally about the next steps children need to make to ensure their continued very good progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Most children make outstanding progress in their learning and development. Most enter the school with overall skills below those expected for their age. Many, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, enter with very limited skills, especially in their ability to communicate, in their understanding of number, in aspects of their personal and emotional development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Because staff encourage them so well to develop their all-round skills, children achieve extremely well in most areas of their learning. Many enter the Reception class with expected skills or above for their age. Their personal, social and emotional development, physical and creative development is outstanding. Many children make excellent progress in their speaking and listening skills. The most severely disadvantaged children, for example, those with autistic spectrum disorders or physical impairment, make remarkable progress as a result of highly skilful support and extremely well focused individual teaching programmes. The tiny proportion of children who speak English as an additional language learn and develop at the same impressive rate as the other children.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The vast majority of children soon realise that others have an equal right to attention and to share resources. The attendance of children is satisfactory. When they arrive they rush into the Nursery, happy to leave their parents or carers, and immediately immerse themselves in the plethora of exciting activities on offer. Many concentrate well on building, painting, making, singing and exploring books and materials, to complete tasks to their satisfaction before they move on to another absorbing activity. They eat healthy snacks and show a very good awareness of 'road safety' by following one-way paths and obeying road signs in their wonderful outside classroom. Children treat each other with the utmost respect, are kind to each other and keen to reassure those who might have fallen over or hurt themselves accidentally. As a result of the subtle promptings and positive modelling of behaviour by adults, children soon learn what is acceptable and what is not. As a result, their behaviour is excellent. Their awareness of a world outside their own is developed well, for example, when they gleefully danced inside a Chinese dragon and made Chinese chicken pancakes, which most ate with relish.

Quality of provision

Effectiveness in promoting children's learning and development

Grade: 1

All staff work very effectively as a team to provide children with stimulating and relevant learning. By jointly and regularly reviewing children's progress, staff are well placed to plan activities to appeal to children's interests and to promote their excellent progress. Although information about individual children's 'next steps' is shared verbally, the school acknowledges the need to disseminate that information more formally and systematically to ensure its best possible communication. Overall, though, children get what they need and respond to the stimulating range of activities and resources very enthusiastically. Children very successfully develop their physical skills because they have so many opportunities to cycle, steer, climb, make, manipulate computers, cut, paste and paint and practise writing letters and numbers. The wide range of visitors from local services, for example, the police and fire officers, promotes

extremely well children's understanding of safety and how to avoid danger. The visits they enjoy out of school widen their knowledge of localities very different to their own. For example, their visit to a farm gave them the opportunities to experience a rural environment, to handle and feed farm animals, to explore a forest and to ride on tractor trailers. The wonderful musical instruments located outdoors encourage children to experiment with sound and to develop an early sense of spirituality.

Effectiveness in promoting children's welfare

Grade: 1

The school fully meets the latest requirements concerning the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All procedures for safeguarding children and for child protection are also met. The school works closely with specialist agencies to support children who require specific help and to ensure that those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or those with medical conditions are sensitively transferred to suitable settings that will cater best for their needs. Similarly, apt arrangements are made for children to move on to Reception classes to ensure smooth transition. The support for vulnerable children is a key strength, with adults who work closely with them, individually or in very small groups, having great expertise in their special area of need. This means that these children make excellent progress in their small steps in learning. Staff pay very careful attention to ensuring equal access to all equipment both indoors and out. For example, an extension to the outside, raised, flower and seed beds has made it possible for any child who uses a wheelchair to have easy access to them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher promotes very effective teamwork, has a keen sense of purpose and acts as an excellent role model for all staff. She ensures that the most productive partnerships possible are formed with parents and carers, other Early Years Foundation Stage providers, outside agencies and business organisations, in order to provide excellent support for children's learning. Because the headteacher is with the children and works alongside the other staff on a daily basis, she is in a very strong position to check on and evaluate the quality of provision and to weigh up what might need improvement. High priority is given to training to enable staff to gain further qualifications and to hone their relevant skills. Together with the headteacher, the two part-time teachers expertly direct the work of support staff for the maximum benefit of the children. The sensitive and productive way in which the headteacher and staff work with parents and carers, to involve them in their children's development and to encourage them to enlist for adult education, typifies the school's excellent promotion of community cohesion. Visits to very different localities and celebrations of key events from other cultures further exemplify this and provide these young children with a very good foundation for developing awareness and appreciation of other communities. Governors positively support the school's work. Few, though, have yet to take advantage of the headteacher's open invitation to spend a morning or an afternoon to better acquaint themselves with the Nursery's excellent provision. On the other hand, governors very successfully manage the budget and oversee building projects with an eagle eye. Together with all the other outstanding work in the Nursery, these strengths ensure that the school provides excellent value for money.

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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 is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
The standards[1] 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/or disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children?	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
The extent to which 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 effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

What a lovely time I had when I inspected your Nursery for two days to see how well you are all getting on. I very much enjoyed chatting with you about what you were doing and watching you play and learn.

Your Nursery is outstanding. It gives you so many lovely things to do and to play with that you learn something new almost every day. You didn't seem to stop moving from one place to another, either painting, making things, running, jumping, climbing or whizzing around the outside track on your scooters or in your cars. The musical instruments outside are fantastic - aren't they? They make such lovely sounds when you hit them or shake them. The photographs I saw from your visit to the farm showed me how much you enjoyed stroking and feeding the lambs and even milking the goat!

All the grown ups who work with you are so kind to you and take such really good care of you that you obviously feel really safe and love coming to Nursery. Your headteacher and the staff are always trying to make things even better so that you can carry on learning as well as you do now.

I have asked them to do one thing to make the Nursery even better for you. It is to make sure that all the grown ups know exactly what each of you needs to do next to help you learn even more.

Thank you again for being so friendly and helping me during the two days.