

# Parkview Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112089
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	325525
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lynne Read

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 (total)	80
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Gabbert
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Susan Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 April 2006
<b>School address</b>	St Georges Road Millom Cumbria LA18 4JE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01229 772840
<b>Fax number</b>	01229 773909

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This popular nursery is a partner to the adjacent Millom Children's Centre and pre-school and serves an area with pockets of social disadvantage. Together with a range of voluntary and local authority agencies, the partnership provides a 'one stop shop' for families. The Nursery offers part-time places for three and four year olds. Additional sessions are available in the pre-school to provide all day 'wrap around' care. Around eight per cent of children have learning and emotional difficulties and/or disabilities and outreach workers also provide support for younger children with additional needs. Most children are of White British heritage. There have been changes in key staff and, at the time of the inspection, a new headteacher had been in post for just under two terms.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good nursery school. The personal and social development of the children, together with the quality of care, is outstanding. Parents have very high opinions of the school. Comments include, 'the staff are a dedicated and really impressive team' and 'Parkview Nursery provides a fantastic start to children's school life'. The Nursery has excellent links with its partners and other agencies and strives hard to meet local needs. For example, families can take advantage of the pre-school provision when nursery places are full or for extended care. Some staff also work in the Children's Centre, offering courses and expert help and advice.

Achievement is good. It is outstanding in personal and social education. Children's development when they start Nursery varies widely; in the main it is below that usually seen. The overall gain in learning is good and by the time children transfer to their Reception classes, they are generally working at the level expected. Children's personal and social development, including an awareness of how to stay healthy, is a major strength and above expectations. Behaviour is excellent. Children share and collaborate exceptionally well for their age and thoroughly enjoy their learning. This prepares them well for their future education and results in a very pleasant and productive atmosphere. Communication skills are good so children are confident in expressing ideas but early reading and writing skills are not as well developed. This is because children's knowledge of sounds and letters is too basic, especially for the more able children.

Provision for learning is good. Teaching also takes account of the children's interests. For example, their enthusiasm for being in the fresh air is harnessed through an imaginative range of outdoor activities available in all weathers. A good balance of group sessions and 'free choice' time encourages children to explore and become independent learners. There is excellent provision for children who are experiencing learning or emotional difficulties. Staff often intervene in learning to stretch the more able children but there is no separate strand of planning to ensure consistent challenge for this group. Parents are encouraged to be active partners in their children's education and know about the current topic and learning aims. They are well informed about their children's progress. The excellent standard of care is another major strength in the provision. One parent described the Nursery as a 'nurturing, caring environment' and another wrote that 'every child feels valued and special.' Attention to safety issues is meticulous and welfare requirements are met fully.

The Nursery is well led and managed. In the short time since her appointment the new headteacher has gained the confidence of staff, parents and governors. There have been some good improvements this year, especially in checking and tracking children's learning. The new team has good capacity to develop the school even further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Place more emphasis on teaching sounds and letters to boost early reading and writing skills.
- Ensure that the more able children have consistent challenge, especially in early reading and writing.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

When they join the Nursery, children's development varies widely. For a minority it is advanced for their age, but mainly it is below that usually seen for three year-olds. Several children have

difficulties with communication and relationships. The school's tracking records, assessments and inspection evidence show that achievement is good, both for boys and girls, and they make outstanding progress in personal and social education. By the time children transfer to their Reception Year, development is broadly in line with expectations except in communication, language and literature. For personal and social education it is above expectations. Children benefit from intensive language work and become confident listeners and speakers. Their early reading and writing skills are less well developed because less time is spent learning about sounds within words and the letters that represent them. In particular, the more able children could do better. Skills in counting, recognising numbers and solving problems are good and children have a secure understanding of shapes and measures. Physical and creative development progresses at a good pace because children work with a wide range of materials and have an exciting selection of activities to encourage exercise and dexterity. Children with learning or emotional difficulties are extremely well supported; they make outstanding progress.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Children's personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, are emphasised through all the school's work and are outstanding. Children thoroughly enjoy coming to Nursery; they leave their parents and carers confidently on arrival and quickly immerse themselves in the exciting learning environment. They follow the routines very well and thoroughly enjoy social occasions, such as snack time. Children sustain excellent concentration, for example, when creating patterns on the computer. Attendance is good with the vast majority of absences due to illness. Parents say children thoroughly enjoy Nursery. One wrote, 'there is always a buzz about the place and lots of laughing and enjoyment'.

Children are securely cocooned within this very safe environment. They understand the need for hygiene and, for example, take care to wash their hands after handling the pet guinea pig. They know what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and enjoy the fruit and vegetables provided at snack time. Children plant secure foundations for their future economic well-being through a broad range of learning experiences and by developing the ability to share and collaborate very effectively. They show respect for other people's feelings and offer help where needed. This supports the harmonious community feel in the Nursery.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Effectiveness in promoting children's learning and development**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have high expectations and good expertise; they know how young children learn best and turn challenging tasks into interesting 'play' activities. For example, children have great fun learning about nature through the 'bird's nest' role-play area.

Staff observe and assess children's learning constantly. The information is then effectively used to ensure that added support is provided where needed. Adults know children well and often intervene in their learning to stretch the more able. However, the information from assessments is not as yet used to provide a more challenging strand to the week's planning to ensure that these children are consistently stretched, especially in reading and writing. Adults lead short, focused tasks at the beginning and end of each session and then provide a varied selection of activities for children to practise and consolidate what they learn. However, too little emphasis

is given to teaching sounds and letters as the building blocks for early reading and writing work. Children have individual booklets to illustrate their 'learning journeys'. These are shared with parents and 'the next steps' provide good help and advice to guide future learning. Good support is provided in work and play and children are constantly encouraged to recognise and celebrate their own successes.

The curriculum is good and includes constant opportunities for children to investigate and discover things for themselves. Together with a good range of visits, this ensures that children have a broad range of experiences which help them to develop their skills and talents and expand their horizons. Children with behavioural or emotional difficulties have excellent, sensitive support and are fully involved in all activities.

The learning environment is stimulating and includes carefully chosen resources that capture children's interests and fire their curiosity. For example, children thoroughly enjoyed using their senses when exploring the properties of 'red slime' in the messy area. Staff take care to introduce characters from different backgrounds into children's stories and play. Fundraising activities for children in Africa help to provide a wider perspective for these young children.

## **Effectiveness in promoting children's welfare**

### **Grade: 1**

Care and protection for children is seen as paramount and is outstanding. Key workers are allocated to small groups of children so they get to know them and their families exceptionally well. This, in turn, generates a great deal of trust and underpins the strong home-nursery partnership. There are excellent links between the Children's Centre, pre-school care and nursery settings and the day flows very smoothly for those children using the wrap-around facilities. The settling in arrangements are very good and highlighted as a strength by parents. Productive links with local infant and primary schools ensures a smooth transition to the Reception classes. Child protection procedures are firmly established and checks on the suitability of staff meet requirements fully. The building and grounds are secure, resources are of a high quality and the standard of cleanliness is excellent. There is a safe handover to parents and carers at the end of sessions and staff use this time profitably to share and celebrate children's work. Required policies, procedures and risk assessments are in place, meticulously followed and regularly reviewed. Arrangements for first aid and handling medication are successfully established and all staff are keenly aware of individual needs, such as allergies or dietary requirements.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Staff form a strong team and work very hard to eliminate any barriers to learning. For example, an intensive speaking and listening course helps to boost language skills for those who are having difficulties. Adults ensure that all groups of pupils have access to the full range of experiences on offer. Staffing and planning arrangements are flexible to cater for children's interests and allow for one to one support where needed. Good use is made of the local environment in planning so children feel at the heart of their community.

A range of stakeholders including staff, parents and governors all contribute to the self-evaluation process and help to develop improvement plans. The Nursery clearly knows its strengths and has identified appropriate areas for development. As a result of the process, the school introduced improved systems for tracking children's progress. The headteacher and staff

are currently working on refining these assessment systems to ensure consistency in judgements and make better use of the information when planning tasks. Governors bring a good range of expertise and experience to enhance management and some are active in the daily life of the school. Governance is good and all statutory requirements are met.

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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

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	2
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	2

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do children in the EYFS achieve?</b>	2
The standards[1] reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children?</b>	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	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	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<b>How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?</b>	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

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

11 October 2009

Inspection of Parkview Nursery School, Cumbria. LA18 4JE

Dear Children

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. It was good to see you enjoying the spring sunshine in the outdoor area and learning so much about the birds that come to visit. I heard a lot of laughter during the two days so I know you have fun when you are playing and working.

I think you are making good progress and I was impressed with your counting, your colourful paintings and your 'sock puppet' characters. You like making models and were very busy with your hammers and screwdrivers. I liked the pictures and patterns you made using the computer, just like bigger boys and girls do.

I saw you enjoying books with your teachers and taking some home to share. I also know that some of you can write your name – well done. Most of you though, aren't quite as confident in knowing about letters and sounds as you are in the rest of your learning. Once you go to primary school, you will need these skills for reading and writing so I suggested that your school helps you to split up sounds in words and match letters and sounds. I'm sure your teachers will find some fun ways of doing this so I'm sure you will enjoy it.

Your parents sent me lots of replies to the questionnaire and I was very happy about that. They think your Nursery is good and I agree with them. They are pleased that you have such a good time learning so many important things. Some told me that you want to come at weekends! What good workers you are!

Thank you for those lovely smiles you gave me and for letting me join in with your games and activities. I really enjoyed the conversations I had and the 'cups of tea' you very kindly made for me in the home corner. I hope that you continue to enjoy your learning journey as you move into your next schools. Keep up the hard work and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lynne Read

Lead inspector