

Hindpool Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112093
Local Authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	325527
Inspection dates	14–15 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Shirley Herring

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	78
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	16
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Gill Niven
Headteacher	Mrs Jackie Mutton
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2006
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Bath Street Barrow-in-Furness Cumbria LA14 5TS
Telephone number	01229 894660
Fax number	01229 431189

Age group	3–4
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The Nursery is at the heart of the community and serves an area of considerable social and economic disadvantage. Children attend the Nursery part-time, from the start of the term following their third birthday. The vast majority of children are from a White British background with very few children from other ethnic origins. The Nursery has experienced considerable changes since the last inspection and offers an extensive range of additional services, including childcare, before and after school clubs and a holiday club. It has close links with the Children's Centre on the same site and with local schools and colleges.

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 school which is successful in its aim of encouraging children to develop independence, resilience and self-esteem. Personal development and provision for children's welfare are outstanding. Parents appreciate the 'Lovely environment provided for children to play and learn.' The fact that a parent mentions play first, reflects the school's guiding principle of how young children learn.

Children clearly enjoy coming to school. They relate very well to all adults, but particularly their key worker, so they feel confident, safe and secure. They are developing a very good appreciation of a healthy lifestyle and make the most of the freedom for vigorous exercise in the excellent outdoor area. Good hygiene routines are well established. Children behave well. They cooperate very successfully with each other, taking turns and this is a very good preparation for later life.

Children enter school with skills that are generally below what is usual for their age. They make good progress because of good teaching and a well balanced and varied curriculum. The majority are equipped with the appropriate skills for their age by the time they leave the Nursery. Children with learning difficulties and/or learning disabilities are identified at a very early stage and so they achieve well. The school has excellent links with other professionals, for example the Health Visitors on site, and seeks specialist advice for individuals when needed. There are good systems for assessing and tracking children's progress and adults know their children well. However, this good information on children's previous learning is not reflected in teachers' plans, and expectations for children of different levels of development are not clear.

Promotion of children's welfare is exceptional. All the recommended procedures for safeguarding children are fully in place in the nursery and the extended services. Governors take a full part in conducting regular risk assessments to ensure the safety of all children, including those who use the additional childcare services. Children respond well to the very high standards set by staff in showing courtesy and respect for adults and children. They are guided and encouraged to care for their own needs and hygiene is given a high priority throughout the school.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has managed the considerable changes to provision with skill, determination and sensitivity. The senior management team work productively together to coordinate the range of services to maximise the benefits for the children. The school monitors its work accurately and uses the results to bring about improvements. The management team is exploring ways to collate information on children's progress in a format which would make it easier to compare children's attainment with what can be expected for their age. There have been good improvements since the last inspection and the school has a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure teachers' planning sets out clear expectations based on children's different levels of learning and development.
- Collate the available information on children's development in a format that enables the school to compare children's attainment more easily with what can be expected for their age.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery with a range of skills which overall are below what could be expected for their age. The language and social skills of some children are particularly weak. They make good progress during their time in school because learning is based on enjoyable practical activities which engage children's interest. The concentrated focus by all adults on developing children's language and social skills enables children to achieve particularly well in these areas from a low starting point. Consequently, most children attain the standards expected for their age in all areas of learning by the time they leave the nursery. Given the children's below typical starting points, this represents good achievement. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified at an early stage, sometimes in the childcare provision before they join Nursery. They receive good support and so they make good progress in improving their skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. The school's strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development enables these young children to develop independence as well as very good attitudes to learning from an early age. They behave well and spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. Children clearly enjoy coming to school and are very keen to join in the wide range of interesting activities on offer. Attendance is good for children of this age. Children learn to stay safe because of the clear guidance they receive and they thrive with the freedom to experiment and develop their skills in a safe and secure environment. They are adopting a healthy lifestyle and readily choose a fruit snack from the attractive displays provided for them. They value and benefit from extensive opportunities for physical activities indoors and in the extensive outdoor area. Children make a very positive contribution to their own school community and join in all activities with enthusiasm. They treat each other with respect and help each other, for example the older ones readily volunteered to show some visiting children the equipment. Qualities such as independence and the ability to work together to solve problems is preparing these children very well for the future.

Quality of provision

Effectiveness in promoting children's learning and development

Grade: 2

Children's learning and development are promoted well as all staff have a good understanding of how young children learn. There is a well planned range of purposeful, practical activities across all areas of learning which includes a good balance between those that are led by an adult and those that children choose for themselves. Independence is promoted consistently and effectively. For example, children, with a little help from parents, choose their first activity each session and register their choice by sticking the appropriate picture in their planning book. There are good systems for assessing and tracking children's progress through regular observations. Staff know the children well but the needs of groups of different abilities are not sufficiently specified when work is planned to ensure that all children are fully challenged. There are good links with the childcare (Butterfly) room to encourage continuity in learning and development, leading to the development of similar systems for planning topics and

assessing children's progress. Every effort is made to promote and value parents' contributions to learning. One parent particularly valued the opportunity to attend a series of language sessions with her child so she could continue the help at home. There is good communication with parents and many report that children are using the skills at home that they have learnt through the Nursery.

Effectiveness in promoting children's welfare

Grade: 1

Children's welfare is promoted very effectively leading to children's outstanding personal development and well-being. Parents are confident that any concerns they have are listened to and dealt with quickly. All the recommended procedures for safeguarding children are in place and consistently and rigorously applied throughout all aspects of the provision. Relationships between adults and children are excellent and children relate particularly well to their key worker who oversees their progress and needs. Every effort has been taken to ensure that the exciting outdoor area is safe and secure and so children are confident in practising physical skills such as balancing along a beam on the safe, spongy surface. Children respond well to the high expectations of good behaviour. They develop a very good level of independence as they are encouraged to take care of their own personal needs and to make choices about their activities. There are excellent procedures for introducing children to the Nursery, including home visits, which help children to settle quickly and make a good start to their education. The extensive range of additional services on offer, such as the childcare group, makes an excellent contribution to children's welfare.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The much respected headteacher has successfully led the school through an extended period of significant changes. The children and the wider community are now benefiting from the extended range of services on offer. The inclusion of the childcare manager in the senior management team is helping to promote a consistent approach to planning and assessment and so children are well prepared when they start in the nursery. The school evaluates its work carefully and accurately and uses the information well to bring about improvements. The school's emphasis on developing social and language skills, which are identified as an area of weakness as children start school, has helped children to achieve particularly well in these areas. There are good systems for assessing and tracking children's progress but the school is exploring ways to make it easier to use the information to judge how children's attainment compares with the national expectations for their age. Community cohesion is good. The school provides a good range of opportunities for children in this largely all white school to learn about other cultures. Governance is good. Governors are a regular presence in school and have supported the headteacher effectively through recent challenges. The school gives good 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?	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

How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	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	2

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	2
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	2
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?	2
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?	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	1
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**

16 January 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Hindpool Nursery School, Cumbria, LA14 5TS

I know that you might need some help to read my letter but I am sure that someone will help you to understand the good things I have to say about your Nursery. Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I think that Hindpool Nursery is a good school and in fact some things about it are excellent.

I agree with your parents that all the adults take excellent care of you. They arrange lots of interesting things to help you to learn. I could tell how much you enjoyed playing in the huge outdoor area which is full of exciting but safe equipment.

You play your part by trying to do things for yourself and behaving well. I like the way you help each other and you were really kind to the new children who were just starting in the nursery. Your parents say how much you enjoyed being in the Butterfly room and this helped you to settle into Bird and Bear Class very quickly.

It is part of my job to suggest ways in which a good school could be even better, and in fact the school was already thinking about them. The adults are going to do two things.

- Use the information they have about your work to check how well you are doing for your age.
- Make sure that they include work for different groups in their plans.

Good luck to you all. I had a lovely time in Hindpool and I hope you always enjoy learning.

Yours sincerely

Shirley Herring

Lead inspector