

Turncroft Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119099
Local Authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	326945
Inspection dates	13–14 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Kathleen McArthur

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	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	103
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Bent
Headteacher	Mrs Patricia Rudd
Date of previous school inspection	29 March 2006
School address	Highfield Road Darwen Lancashire BB3 2DN
Telephone number	01254 701534
Fax number	01254 701534

Age group	3–4
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

The nursery is situated close to the town centre and serves a wide area, much of which is socially and economically disadvantaged. Most children are of White British heritage. A few are of Asian heritage and a very small proportion speaks English as their second language. The proportion of pupils with additional needs is below average. The nursery offers a mixture of part-time and full-time education. Childcare provision offered at Turncroft Nursery School is provided by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council and managed by the school. This extended care provision offers childcare throughout the day, including before and after school during school term times, and wrap around sessions are offered to the school nursery class sessions. A 'walking bus' for pupils from the nearby primary school who attend the before and after school clubs is also provided. There is a separate Ofsted inspection of this provision.

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 nursery school, full of happy children who thrive in the warm, nurturing and stimulating environment. The nursery evaluated its performance as good but the inspection found this was too modest. Outstanding commitment and exceptional dedication from the headteacher inspire a focused vision for continual improvement shared by all staff and governors. Using their very good knowledge and understanding of local needs, they provide wrap-around care and parent and family education, placing the nursery at the heart of the community. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive. Many commented that staff are open, friendly and approachable and that their children love attending, saying, 'All my child talks about is nursery!' and, 'My child does not want to come home!'

Most children start nursery with skills below those typical for their age, especially in language, communication and personal development. Children make excellent progress in all areas of learning, most especially in their personal and social skills so they become confident, enthusiastic learners. Teachers, nursery nurses and the extended provision staff work closely together, creating an excellent team dedicated to providing education and care of the highest quality. They have very high expectations of what children can achieve. By the end of their time in nursery, many children reach the learning goal for personal and social development and a significant proportion are working above the levels expected for their age in all other areas.

Staff support learning very effectively through a well planned and balanced blend of activities directed by adults and those chosen by children, which are based on rigorous assessment of each individual child's progress and needs. Excellent assessment systems provide very clear information but do not yet tie in with nationally established systems used in other settings. The outstanding curriculum ensures children regularly experience exciting activities in all areas of learning yet have plenty of opportunities to choose and follow their own interests. Exemplary welfare arrangements provide care of the highest quality. Parents commented very favourably on this, happy in the knowledge they leave their young child in a safe, caring environment.

Leadership's firm belief that every child really does matter is clearly demonstrated in the arrangements for equal opportunities that successfully ensure all groups make excellent progress, including those with additional needs. There is no complacency in this leadership team, seen in excellent improvement since the last inspection and ambitious plans and challenging targets for the future. Consequently, there is an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Link assessment records to local and national systems of recording baseline levels of development on order to provide clearer information when children move to other settings.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Daily language activities enable children to make rapid progress in learning letter sounds in preparation for reading and writing. Their achievement is excellent and enables them to leave with skills and knowledge above those expected. They love hearing stories, listen well and many can name characters and events in favourite tales. Staff make very good use of every opportunity to develop numeracy skills. For example, in a creative activity that linked music with numeracy, children sang with great relish as they counted down to zero. Children make big gains in their

knowledge and understanding of the world as they investigate the wooded area for mini-beasts, confidently use the computers and access the interactive whiteboard. Creative activities inspire imaginative play and enhance progress in language, as children independently organise tea parties in Turncroft Lodge or discuss their paintings. Very skilled support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language enables them to progress at a similar rate to their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Children find learning exciting; they were thrilled to discover several worms under a large stone. Simple routines and fair rules help children feel safe and secure, and their attendance is good. They rapidly gain confidence and independence, are keen to try new things and consequently, make excellent progress in learning and social development. Behaviour is excellent. Children use equipment, such as the bikes, climbing frames and scissors sensibly with careful regard for their own and others' safety, happily sharing and taking turns. They know fruit and vegetables are healthy, love being outdoors and taking part in music and movement sessions that promote their physical health. Very good relationships between staff and children are a major factor in children's outstanding progress and well-being. Sensitive 'circle times' help children consider good and bad feelings, and they show respect and concern for each other. Celebrations of different festivals, such as Chinese New Year, give children a simple appreciation of other faiths and lifestyles. The nursery provides them with an excellent foundation for the next steps in their education.

Quality of provision

Effectiveness in promoting children's learning and development

Grade: 1

Strong teamwork promotes children's learning exceptionally well. Rigorous tracking of progress gives staff excellent knowledge of children's individual learning and developmental needs. Well planned activities successfully challenge every child, according to their particular needs. Children meet an outstanding curriculum in a very attractive and stimulating environment, both indoors and outside. Staff use every available resource so children really enjoy the exciting practical investigations and concentrate on their tasks. The extensive, well resourced outdoor area provides a wide range of possibilities that capture children's natural curiosity, where they can choose to be active or quiet; natural woodland and grass, plenty of room to ride bikes, climb and scramble and use Percy's House and Turncroft Lodge for creative and imaginative play. Visits, for example, to a farm, and festival celebrations successfully enrich and extend children's experiences and cultural development.

Effectiveness in promoting children's welfare

Grade: 1

The Key Worker system ensures staff know the children very well and each child knows exactly who to turn to with any problems. Excellent working partnerships with the extended care provision and all external agencies add to children's sense of security and well-being, so they feel very safe and eager to learn and are keen to come each day. Safeguarding arrangements meet all current requirements. The way the nursery reaches out to the community and provides

curriculum evenings, 'Parents as Educators' courses, the walking bus and toddler groups is a major strength. Carefully planned learning activities and skilled support, often on a one-to-one basis, enable children with additional needs to progress as well as their peers. Rigorous progress tracking and thorough analysis of assessment information enables staff to plan activities that challenge each child and quickly spot if any fall behind. Consequently, all groups of children make excellent progress. Assessment systems are not yet fully compatible with the procedures used in other local and national settings.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Inspired by the headteacher's very clear vision, staff and governors share a common sense of purpose, aiming to improve provision and outcomes for each and every child. Excellent systems to evaluate performance are in place, taking account of the views of governors, parents and the children. Governance is excellent. Governors are actively involved and use their very good working knowledge of all aspects to hold the school to account. The nursery makes an excellent contribution to community cohesion based on very good understanding of the local and wider community and reaches out to meet their needs through family education and wrap-around care provision. For example, ambitious forward-looking plans are in place, responding to a perceived need to extend pre-nursery provision for toddlers. Shrewd budget management ensures the nursery is well staffed and equipped for learning, able to support future plans and gives 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	2
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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	2
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	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

15 May 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Turncroft Nursery School, Blackburn with Darwen, BB3 2DN

Thank you for being so friendly and helping me when I inspected your nursery. I had a lovely time watching you riding your bikes, listening to stories, making music and baking delicious cakes. You are very good at singing, especially when the snake and the crocodile come along!

I found lots and lots of good things that make Turncroft an excellent nursery.

Your parents are very pleased that you are happy, love coming every day and make really good progress. I am sure they are proud of your excellent behaviour and the way you look after each other, share the toys and quickly tidy up ready for story.

The staff make sure you have lots of exciting things to do, especially when you go outside every day. They care for you really well so you are always safe.

The headteacher, staff and governors are working really hard to make nursery even better for all of you, and they try to help your families too.

I hope you enjoy your visit to the farm.

Best wishes to you all.

Yours faithfully

Kathleen McArthur

Lead inspector