

# Offerton Hall Nursery School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106019
<b>Local Authority</b>	Stockport
<b>Inspection number</b>	336598
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 April 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sarah Drake

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

---

<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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	73
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Damian Hodgkinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Catherine Larkin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Half Moon Lane Offerton Stockport SK2 5LB
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 4565851
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 4836821
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@offertonhall-nur.stockport.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–4
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 April 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	336598

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed eight sessions, saw eight teachers and other nursery staff teaching and held meetings with senior staff and the Chair of the Governing Body. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation relating to children's achievement and progress, the planning of the provision and all aspects of leadership and management. The inspectors also took into account the questionnaire responses provided by seven staff and 37 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement of different groups of children to determine whether assessment is used sufficiently well to support and challenge individuals
- the success of the new leadership team in driving forward improvement
- the impact of the Nursery's many partnerships, particularly those with parents and carers, on the quality of children's learning
- the success with which the Nursery promotes community cohesion beyond its locality.

## Information about the school

This small nursery serves a suburban area which has a mixture of owner-occupied and rented housing. The large majority of children attend part-time but around one quarter has full-time places of whom a small number are known to be eligible for a free school meal. Most children are White British but a growing proportion belongs to a range of minority ethnic groups. Of these, a small number are at an early stage of learning English. Few children have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The headteacher was appointed in September 2008 at the same time as the nursery became the host site for a Children's Centre. The nursery shares a site, and has formed a collaboration with, two other schools. In 2009, the nursery's Basic Skills Quality Mark was renewed and it achieved the Silver Eco award.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

Learning is great fun and progresses at an impressive rate in this outstanding nursery. The high quality leadership team has skilfully built on the nursery's well established success to ensure that each child is enthused to enjoy discovering new things within a nurturing, exciting environment. All aspects of the provision are first class but of particular note is the innovative way in which staff create opportunities for children to develop their skills outdoors. Children's skills on entry to the nursery are, overall, broadly as expected for their age but many find it hard to share with others or to understand what behaviour is or is not acceptable. A significant minority have communication difficulties. In response to adults' excellent planning, clear guidance, and questioning that is very well adapted to individuals' different abilities, all children make rapid gains in their learning. Especially impressive are their independence and problem-solving skills. Staff closely monitor children's development, but the current system does not enable them to record individuals' progress beyond the levels expected for their age. This means that the records do not accurately represent the more advanced skills that many achieve by the time they leave for their Reception classes. Children's outstanding awareness of how to keep themselves safe and healthy allows them to take calculated risks that add greatly to their enjoyment and also equip them with important skills for life. For example, under the vigilant but discreet watch of adults, they decide how high they can safely climb in a bush or when they need to ask for help to ensure planks remain upright during the building of a den. The children are extremely interested in others' experiences and eager to share their own achievements and discoveries. They form excellent relationships and behave impeccably.

At the top of the leadership's agenda is maintaining continuous improvement in the children's best interests. Close monitoring of planning and provision, regular seeking of parents' and carers' views, and much internal discussion lead to consolidation of good practice and adaptations when necessary. Over the past eighteen months, staff have successfully developed partnership working with the Children's Centre, renewed assessment systems and greatly extended use of the outdoor area. The nursery is at an early stage of promoting community cohesion beyond the immediate area. Taking into account the exceptional leadership, high quality provision and improvements already made, the nursery has outstanding capacity to continue to improve.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop further the systems for recording children's achievement, by:
  - ensuring that they provide clarity about individuals' progress beyond the skill

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

levels expected for their age.

- Improve the promotion of community cohesion, by:
  - extending to a wider area the good work carried out locally
  - establishing systems through which to assess the impact of its work.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

**1**

Children of different abilities, dispositions and ethnicity all achieve outstandingly well during their short time at the nursery. 'My child has learnt how to read fantastically for a four year old,' 'My daughter has done very well with her speech,' 'My son's confidence has grown immensely,' are typical of parents' and carers' comments about their children's progress. Children arrive full of anticipation at the start of sessions, swiftly settle in small groups with their key worker, then set off to explore with a clear idea in their head of what they want to do. They are eager to include others in their activities and collaborate extremely well with each other. They understand that using another's name is both polite and a useful means of gaining their attention. Most of the older children speak in clear, complex sentences and the overwhelming majority, even those at an early stage of learning English, confidently initiate conversations and follow instructions. Children think about what they are doing. For example, one girl, balancing carefully as she climbed up the hill on uneven tree stumps, took the time to look behind her and check how many she had already stepped on and counted, before continuing accurately from 'five'. Children are excellent decision makers, for example, judging whether a den is large enough for everyone in the group to sit in comfortably for snack time, or whether they have used enough compost to cover the potato plants. They know where to find specific resources and understand that they should turn off lights, 'to save electricity and the world!' The children independently risk assess what they will need and prepare their backpacks before going out for 'forest school' activities. Once there, they listen intently to different sounds, notice changes since they last visited, marvel at, for example, the skeleton of a leaf. The children competently tidy up inside and out. They enjoy using their 'learning journeys' to reflect on past fun, such as celebrations for Diwali, Holi and Easter, and to appreciate their developing skills. Attendance is much higher than in most nursery schools. Children's enthusiasm for learning and persistence if they find something hard, equip them exceptionally well for the future.

*These are the grades for children's outcomes*

**Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

**1**

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

<b>Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: Children's attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of children's learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which children feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Children's behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: Children's attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Extremely detailed yet simple planning builds inventively on children's interests and ensures that their skills develop equally strongly in all areas. The well judged proportions of adult-led activities and those initiated by the children, combined with an equally finely tuned balance between support for individuals and encouragement of independence, create a rich environment in which children flourish. Small group sessions provide challenge for those identified through assessment as more-able or extra input for others to develop, for example, their communication and social skills. All staff are adept at asking questions that require children to think and, importantly, allow them time to consider and give their answers. Adults do not permit their careful recording of children's comments and achievements to detract from their excellent interaction with them. For example, in a session in which children made egg sandwiches the adult clearly knew each individual well and this enabled her to jot down notes about their comments and skills once the session was over, rather than interrupting the flow of the activity. The provision outdoors reflects that inside, so, for example, children use small pegs to attach numerals to a line, larger ones to create a cardboard 'sun' surrounded by rays and even larger ones to fix cloths to rope when making a den. Staff skilfully use visitors, such as a dental health team or a samba musician, and visits, for example, to a donkey sanctuary, to extend children's experience and increase their understanding of the wider world. Outstanding care, guidance and support for individuals' learning and emotional needs includes close working with parents and carers as well as a range of outside agencies, such as speech and language therapists. One parent's comment, 'I think the nursery staff understand my child completely,' encapsulates the intrinsic strength of the

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

provision.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Outstanding leadership and management mean that all staff participate fully in ensuring that the nursery continues to build on its excellent prior work. The headteacher and teacher keep themselves abreast of current best practice and they provide other staff with excellent guidance and example to help them do the same. All staff work together closely as a team, evaluating strengths and areas for development and providing the flexibility so necessary within a nursery setting. The knowledgeable governing body, which includes the headteachers of the two schools that share the site, is highly supportive, for example, over building and financial affairs. It also provides rigorous challenge, for example, over changes to practice. The need to break down barriers to learning in order to promote equality of opportunity is of prime importance to all. Excellent procedures, related to recruitment, training, recording and health and safety, ensure the safeguarding of children from harm. Outstanding partnerships with others enrich the provision. For example, the sharing of nursery facilities with pupils who attend the neighbouring special school promotes tolerance and knowledge of difference among the nursery children. Regular newsletters, a lively website, the provision of story sacks and activity packs, and frequent opportunities to discuss their child's progress, involve parents and carers fully in their children's education. As a result, they willingly add comments to their child's learning journey, attend events and, most recently, raised an impressive £1261 for victims of the Haiti earthquake through the children's sponsored slide. The leadership has not yet established plans as to how it intends to promote community cohesion beyond the immediate area, nor has it developed a system for evaluating the impact of its work in this area. In all other aspects, its excellent work creates an outstanding learning environment in which children flourish.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
---	----------

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	1
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	3
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	1

**Views of parents and carers**

More than 50% of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire, all of whom expressed extremely positive views about the quality of provision. Phrases such as, 'I can't praise the nursery and staff enough, it's fantastic,' and 'I know my child feels safe, secure and valued,' fully reflect parents' and carers' additional comments. The inspection team agrees wholeheartedly with parents' and carers' views.



## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Offerton Hall Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 37 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 73 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	95	2	5	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	93	3	8	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	32	80	8	20	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	80	8	20	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	35	88	5	13	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	75	10	25	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	83	7	18	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	27	68	7	18	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	78	8	20	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	68	13	33	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	75	7	18	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	33	83	7	18	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	93	3	8	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its children. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves

### Overall effectiveness of schools

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well children acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



26 April 2010

Dear Children,

Inspection of Offerton Hall Nursery School, Stockport, SK2 5LB

Thank you so much for chatting with me so openly when I visited your nursery recently and for inviting me, in such a friendly way, to join in with what you were doing. Talking with you and watching how well you all get on together helped me to understand why you enjoy your time at nursery so much and why you only stay at home on nursery days when you absolutely have to. I agree with your parents and carers that your nursery is a wonderful place for you to be; the long word I have used to describe it is 'outstanding'.

Your teachers all know very well, your different likes and dislikes, what you find easy and what you find more difficult. They plan very exciting things for you to do and they help you to decide what you can do on your own and when you might need a little bit of help. This means that you quickly become very good at making up your own minds, explaining your thoughts and behaving in a sensible way. It was great to see how well you look after each other and everything in your garden, and also how good you are at helping to tidy up. I also enjoyed hearing about your adventures at the donkey sanctuary, watching you use computers and seeing how well you write.

All the nursery staff work together really well to make sure you have the best possible time. They carefully check that you are learning as much as you should for your age but they do not yet have ways of recording clearly when you do better than expected. So I have asked them to do this. I have also asked them to think of ways to help you learn more about how people in different parts of this country and the world are much the same as you, but also have interesting, different ways of living.

I hope that you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do at the moment.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Sarah Drake

Lead Inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**