

Fairfield Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119086
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339339
Inspection dates	21–22 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Diane Auton

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 of pupils on the school roll	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Janet Gill
Headteacher	Mrs E Klavins
Date of previous school inspection	15 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. About one quarter of inspection time was spent looking directly at the children's learning and the inspectors observed a range of the activities in which children take part. They observed the work of two teachers and seven early years educational practitioners. They held meetings and discussions with governors, staff, children, and parents and carers. They reviewed the organisational aspects of the school and looked at data about children's progress and attainment, the school's planning documents, policies, procedures and records. They reviewed information provided by parents and carers in the 55 questionnaires that were returned. They also took into account the views staff expressed in their questionnaires.

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

- the pace of children's learning in the classroom
- the effectiveness of provision in ensuring children's welfare and enabling them to make progress in learning
- the impact of leaders and managers, including governors, on children's attainment, achievement and progress.

Information about the school

This is a nursery school of average size serving an ethnically diverse community. The school offers full- and part-time places, as appropriate to the needs of families and children. Around two thirds of the children are of Asian heritage; one third are of White British heritage and a small proportion of Eastern European. Around half of the children are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language when they enter the school. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that found in most schools; in the current year, however, as in previous recent years, the school includes a small number of children who have severe or complex needs. Although the school is over-subscribed and vacant places are quickly taken up, an increasing number of children leave or join at various points during the year.

The school is part of a Children's Centre which is the hub of extended services for families in the area. Extended day care for babies and younger children and for Nursery-age children is provided on site and is fully integrated with the school's provision. The Children's Centre and the day-care provision (The Duckling Club) were not inspected during this visit and both are subject to a separate inspection from Ofsted. The Duckling Club offers 60 integrated full-time places.

The school holds the Healthy Schools 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

This outstanding nursery school has sustained the very high standards of provision identified at its last inspection and continues to enable children to make exceptionally good progress, often from low starting points. It is a magical place for children and in its stimulating, caring, supportive and highly inclusive environment they thrive and develop enthusiasm for learning.

From their earliest years, children love coming to the school. Those who have attended the day-care provision as babies or toddlers have often started to make friendships there and are already comfortable and secure in the setting. Those who start later settle in quickly because of the excellent induction procedures. They become thoroughly involved in the activities provided for them, because staff ensure that these are firmly based on children's interests and needs. As a result, children make excellent progress. By the time they leave the school most children have reached or exceeded expected levels of attainment for their age group. Information from the nursery's partner primary schools confirms that children continue to be successful learners in their next school and that they go on to meet and often to exceed the goals set for the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Innovative practice has been developed in the school to enable parents and carers to take an active role as partners in their children's learning and development. Well-trained and skillful key workers ensure excellent communications with parents and carers about the activities their children are involved in and about what the learning outcomes are. Children love to chat about the photographs and work samples in their learning story folders and can point out how their skills are improving.

Outstanding leadership continues to inspire an excellent team. Leaders successfully ensure that staff and governors develop the skills and commitment that underpin and maintain the high quality provision. Self-evaluation is extremely good because of the ongoing focus on refining and adjusting provision to meet children's changing needs and the needs of families and the community. This is seen, for example, in work currently underway to develop more informative assessment reports, using a new electronic system, so that information can be shared more easily with all stakeholders. All of these factors mean that the school is exceptionally well placed to maintain the excellent quality of education and care it consistently provides.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the use of the new system for tracking and measuring children's progress so that information about how well children are doing can be presented in an easily

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accessible format for sharing with parents and carers, staff and governors.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

1

Children enter Nursery with skills that are a little below the levels typical for their age and with a significant proportion having additional language needs. Children of all abilities become happy learners, full of enthusiasm for Nursery activities, engaged and eager to participate. They make rapid progress in their personal and social development and in establishing early literacy and numeracy skills. All the children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language, develop increasingly effective communication skills. This enables them to have thoughtful discussions with each other and with adults. Those with severe or complex needs develop their confidence and ability to communicate, in relation to the severity of their needs.

Children are extremely secure in the setting and enjoy trusting relationships with the very caring staff. The setting's effective routines enable them to establish good and improving self-help and independence skills. Children's behaviour is extremely good. They are considerate and they clearly greatly enjoy playing and learning together. Children use equipment and resources safely and know when to wash their hands. They enjoy healthy snacks and lunches and can talk about foods that are good for them. They show rapidly improving physical confidence and control in their play both indoors and outside. They make very good progress in their physical development because activities are carefully planned to match their needs. Children show a real interest in literacy activities. They love looking at books and listening to stories. They enjoy identifying letters and their sounds and are keen to try out these new skills in writing activities. Children show that they can concentrate for extended periods; this is because they become absorbed in activities which interest and engage them. They develop many of the important skills they will need for future successful learning. For example, they frequently identify, discuss and go on to solve problems in their activities, seeing tasks through to completion; they reflect with their key adult on what they have learned and help to decide what might be the next steps in their learning. Most children attend regularly, reflecting the school's excellent partnership with parents and carers, although families' mobility and extended trips abroad have a disruptive impact on regular attendance for a minority of children.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

1

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

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment ¹	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
The extent to which children feel safe	1
Children's behaviour	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Children's attendance ¹	3
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Skilled practitioners work as a very effective team to achieve excellent outcomes for children. Day-care staff are very much a part of the team, working closely with their colleagues in the school to ensure that provision is coordinated between the settings and that skills and talents are shared. This contributes very well to the learning, development and welfare of those children who attend both settings. Warm relationships and exemplary organisation of routines ensure that children feel secure. Children who have additional learning and language needs benefit greatly from the small group teaching and individualised support that the school provides. Those who have complex and severe difficulties are enabled to enjoy successful learning alongside their peers in a mainstream setting and staff work very effectively with external specialists to ensure accurate ongoing assessment for these children during their time in the school. Provision for all of the children is planned meticulously, with evaluation and review in-built at each stage. This ensures that activities, both indoors and in the excellent outdoor area, meet each child's needs exceptionally well. Assessment gives a very detailed picture of individual children's progress. Learning activities are extremely well designed to capitalise on children's interests and promote high levels of independence and staff are always on hand to guide, support and encourage children to be active, independent learners. Excellent attention is given to ensuring that children are safe and free from harm at all times. Sensitive induction arrangements and excellent relationships between staff and parents and carers help ensure that pastoral care is of the highest quality. The school works productively with a large number of external agencies and often takes a leading role in collaborative action to support individual families.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

An extremely strong team ethos embraces all staff and governors. They all wholeheartedly share the headteacher's clear vision for achieving the best possible outcomes for children. Safeguarding is given extremely high priority, with staff and governors showing excellent awareness of safeguarding issues and with highly effective procedures for child protection and assessing risk fully in place.

Leaders and managers know the school extremely well and are continuously seeking ways to improve it further by setting the highest expectations of themselves and the children, and by finding very effective ways to develop and enhance provision. Systems to ensure quality are exceptionally well organised; they are embedded in practice and all staff contribute to reflection and evaluation. Across the team there is a dedication to removing barriers to learning and celebrating the achievements of children at every stage. As a result, the school is highly inclusive and is very effective in promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination. Staff are deployed very effectively to ensure excellent supervision at all times and also to support the development of innovative practice. This contributes extremely well to children's learning and development. Governors have a good overview of provision in the school and are able to evaluate its quality and impact. The school has recently introduced a new and effective electronic system to track and measure children's progress; senior staff have begun to use the system well to help plan ongoing improvement of the school. This is still work in progress, however, and further development is required to produce clear progress reports that can be shared with all stakeholders.

The school promotes community cohesion actively and extremely well in a multitude of ways: through its effective partnership with parents and carers; through flexible patterns of provision, which meet the differing needs of families; through its extensive community links; through its excellent partnership with the children's centre and its links with local schools; and through the leading role it plays in its locality in fostering inter-agency work to promote children's health, welfare and learning.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

Around three quarters of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. All of those who responded said they agree or strongly agree that they are happy with their children's experience at the school. This is in line with the inspection team's judgement on the school's outstanding overall effectiveness and reflects the school's extremely effective partnership with parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fairfield 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 55 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 80 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	78	12	22	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	45	82	10	18	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	33	60	20	36	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	58	21	38	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	69	17	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	56	22	40	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	62	21	38	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	49	23	42	4	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	64	18	33	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	56	24	44	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	56	24	44	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	32	58	23	42	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	69	16	29	1	2	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	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). 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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



23 April 2004

Dear Children

Inspection of Fairfield Nursery School, Accrington, BB5 0LD

Thank you very much for the lovely warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your nursery. We came to see how well it is doing and how you are all getting on with your learning. We really enjoyed our visit. This is what we found out.

- Fairfield is an excellent nursery. You learn lots of interesting things, you have great fun and there are plenty of exciting activities for you to get involved in.
- The grown-ups look after you extremely well. Your mummies, daddies and carers think so too and they are very pleased with how well you are doing.
- You are very well-behaved children. You are kind to each other and you play very well together. Well done! It was lovely to see how much you enjoy coming to nursery.

Your teachers all work very hard to make the nursery as good as it can possibly be.

They showed me how they are trying to improve some of the ways they share information about how well you are doing in your learning with everybody in the nursery and with your mummies, daddies and carers. I think this is a good idea and I have asked them to carry on working on it.

Keep trying hard and keep on having fun in nursery!

With my best wishes to you and your families.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Diane Auton

Lead inspector

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