

# Hillside Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119093
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339343
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sue Sharkey

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	80
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Anne Kenyon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lyn Dawber
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 July 2007
<b>School address</b>	Cedar Avenue Haslingden Rossendale BB4 5NH
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 activities involving three teachers and five teaching assistants sessions. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior staff, children and representatives of the governors. Inspectors talked informally with parents and carers and looked at the school's system for tracking children's progress, safeguarding documents, key policies and assessments. Inspection questionnaires from 57 parents and carers and four school staff were also taken into account.

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

- the strategies the school has in place to raise achievement in communication, language and literacy, and mathematics
- the school's plans to ensure that all groups of pupils make the very best progress
- how far the school has developed personalised learning for all children
- the impact of monitoring on children's achievement.

## Information about the school

This nursery serves a wide area in an urban community. The large majority of children are from White British backgrounds but a small number speak English as an additional language. The proportion of children with special education needs and/or disabilities is low. Most children attend part time and are admitted to the nursery following their third birthday.

An independent provider runs before school, lunchtime and after-school care on the premises. This setting did not form part of the inspection but a report about the quality of its provision can be found on the Ofsted website.

**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?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

Hillside Nursery provides a good quality of education. The main reason for this is the motivation and dedication of its staff and governing body. Outstanding care, guidance, support and safeguarding procedures ensure that children are extremely safe, happy and secure. The nursery plays a central role within the community and is valued by parents and carers who feel that this is a very caring school where children's personal development is a priority.

Children develop good personal and social skills because adults have high expectations of them, particularly in learning to work in groups as well as learning independently. Children quickly gain confidence and are keen to try out new experiences in the world around them. Overall, they enter Nursery with knowledge and skills that are usually below those expected for their age, particularly in letters and sounds and calculation. This year, staff have made changes in the way in which they teach letters and sounds and calculations; these have been successful and are already raising children's achievement in these areas. By the time they leave Nursery, attainment in all areas of learning for most children is typical for their age and some exceed this. The school plans a curriculum which is flexible enough to adapt in order to meet children's needs but the activities do not always challenge children's learning sufficiently. Adults work with children in groups where they encourage them to listen carefully to each other, take turns and share. Through good quality questioning some adults skilfully encourage children to speak, develop new language skills and extend their learning, however, this quality of questioning is not consistent for all groups of children.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school constantly focuses on encouraging them to cooperate well and resolve any problems amicably. Children are excited when they talk about celebrations for Chinese New Year. They thoroughly enjoyed eating noodles with chopsticks and dancing with the dragon. The school works closely with parents and carers and an important feature at the beginning of each half-day is the welcome they and their children receive. Attendance is broadly average and the school works well with families to help them understand the importance of regular attendance.

The school has good capacity to improve. Self-evaluation is accurate and, since the last inspection, the school has made improvements. They include ensuring that both boys and girls enjoy a wide range of activities to promote writing. The tracking of children's progress has developed well but is not yet rigorous enough to ensure that staff fully identify all children's needs in order to guide planning.

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

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

- Raise attainment and improve achievement, by:
  - ensuring that all groups of children are consistently questioned in order to extend their learning
  - ensuring that activities planned constantly challenge children's learning.
- Increase the rigour with which staff record and monitor children's progress and use the information to guide their planning.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

2

Children achieve well and enjoy their learning. They engage well and are happily motivated by the many opportunities to explore and learn both indoors and out. They learn to work and play alongside each other, often in specific small groups, and are also happy to play on their own in the nurturing environment. For example, children enjoyed watching a slug travel across the soil saying it could not possibly be a snail because it did not have a shell on its back. While another child was using a sound detector to explore for treasure in the sand, he listened for the high-pitched sound and was delighted when he was successful.

Children practise and improve new skills successfully. They make marks on paper as they write letters to their friends and happily extend their counting skills while singing action songs. Children enjoy sitting quietly and sharing a book, turning the page and exploring the pictures. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well.

Children trust the adults who look after them and provide them with an extremely safe environment in which they enjoy learning and playing with their friends. They develop a good understanding of the need to keep healthy and they thoroughly enjoy playing energetically in the outdoor area. Children are enthusiastic during their snack time when they can choose what healthy food they would like and adults foster good social skills. Children's behaviour is good. With sensitive adult support, their enquiring minds and willingness to participate help them to try new situations and to experience unfamiliar activities. They make a good contribution to the nursery community and help to take responsibility for tidying up and putting things away. As a result, they show increasing levels of confidence and independence enabling them, as parents and carers confirm, to be well prepared for their Reception class in other schools.

*These are the grades for children's outcomes*

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<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>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of children's learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which children feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Children's behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Children's attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching and the curriculum are of good quality, enabling children of all abilities to learn well. Small-group activities with teachers and other key workers are successful in developing children's understanding and independent learning. For example, making their own musical instruments encouraged children to make choices and select materials to create the sounds they wanted. The spacious outdoor area provides a safe and secure learning environment for children. Staff help children to make good use of both indoors and outside. They plan activities that encourage the development of a range of skills but, because assessment systems do not yet pinpoint precisely individuals' skills development, there is not always enough challenge to ensure that children make the very best progress. Adults' questioning of children to extend their learning is often good but this is not consistently so for all groups of children. Teaching assistants provide good quality support for children with dual language skills and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and help them make good progress.

The curriculum is well planned. Staff meet weekly to discuss children's progress and ensure the planning incorporates any changes in response to children's needs and interests. For example, a recent visit locally sparked off children interests and they chatted away merrily as they looked at the photographs during group time. Although information and communication technology (ICT) resources are evident and children enjoy using the Chatter Box to record and listen to their voices, they do not have sufficiently ready access to regular hands-on ICT practice. Children experience exciting visits within the local community as well as visitors. For example, circus personnel

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introduced children to some new throwing and catching skills and a travelling zoo enabled them to see and meet an exciting range of different creatures. All these help to extend children's skills particularly their personal, physical and social development. All staff are committed to providing excellent pastoral care and this makes a major impact on children's personal development. First-class induction systems are in place, ensuring that children quickly settle into the nursery, and strong links with other schools help transfers to Reception classes to run smoothly. Children work in small groups with a key worker allocated to each group. This ensures that they get to know their key worker extremely well and develop the confidence to talk with them if they have any problems.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>2</b>
	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher and all staff demonstrate a caring ethos that pervades the work of the school. In providing strong leadership, the headteacher unites the staff so that they all work successfully as a team. This is an inclusive school that works successfully to promote equal opportunities and avoid discrimination. This is exemplified through the good progress made by all groups of children and the way in which they work and play well together. Procedures to record observations and assessments of children's skills are good but, as yet, they are not rigorous enough to enable staff to fully identify all children's needs and guide planning. Staff and governors are ambitious for all children to achieve well. Governors provide good guidance; they support and challenge with enthusiasm and commitment and are aware of the need to develop their role of monitoring provision for themselves. The school promotes community cohesion well by ensuring that children have many opportunities to begin to become aware of different cultures. Arrangements for safeguarding children are of a high quality. Staff and governors are well trained and all carry out very seriously their role of ensuring that children are safe in school. The school provides good value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire are positive about the way the school cares for and educates their children. They feel that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and they are pleased with their children's progress. Some took time to add comments to the questionnaire they returned, many to reinforce the strength of their positive views and inspectors agree with them. A very small minority of parents and carers felt that the school did not always deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found that behaviour in school is good and that the nursery does have clear systems in place for children who do not always behave well.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hillside 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 59 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	49	83	10	17	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	49	83	10	17	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	44	75	14	24	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	68	18	31	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	45	76	13	22	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	71	16	27	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	75	15	25	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)	45	76	12	20	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	73	15	25	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	68	17	29	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	64	19	32	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	44	75	15	25	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	81	10	17	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](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.**



15 July 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Hillside Nursery School, Rossendale, BB4 5NH

The other inspectors and I enjoyed our visit to your school very much. When we walked in and saw how colourful it was and what exciting work was on the wall, we knew that we would enjoy our time with you. Thank you for talking to us and telling us all about the exciting things you do. I could see how much you enjoy being inside school as well as outside. I was impressed with how well some of you painted or printed pictures of sunflowers. They looked so bright and cheerful. Your mums, dads and carers think that your school is a good nursery and is very safe. We agree with them.

We watched you inside school as well as outside and it was lovely to see you being so friendly to each other and friendly to all the adults teaching and working with you. You were well behaved and sometimes we didn't hear you and wondered if you were creeping around!! It was lovely to see you working well with each other, the way you shared and played together at the vets. In fact, we thought that all this was good! I could tell that you were learning well because of all the different activities that the grown-ups organise for you and also because you can do just about everything as well as other children of your age. The adults are good at teaching and in the way they keep checking on how well you do things but we have asked them to do this even better. Teachers plan exciting activities for you and we have also asked them to include more difficult activities and always to ask all of you lots of questions to help you learn even more. All the adults that work with you also care for and look after you very well.

Thank you for helping us find out about your school and for being such friendly children.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sue Sharkey

Lead inspector

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