

Burnwood Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123949
Local Authority	Stoke-On-Trent
Inspection number	340456
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2009
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	59
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Stephen Pratt
Headteacher	Miss Juliet Levingstone
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed a range of learning activities and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of children, and a small group of parents. They observed the school's work, 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 in the parental questionnaires that were returned.

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

the pace and continuity of children's progress in the areas of learning

the effectiveness of provision in the Nursery in ensuring children's welfare and enabling them to make progress in learning

the impact of leadership and management, including that of governors, on children's attainment, achievement and progress.

Information about the school

The school serves an urban area. Most children come from White British backgrounds with a small proportion from other heritages, including a very small number of children who are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is very large in comparison with most other schools.

The school shares its site with a children's centre. The children's centre is subject to a separate inspection from Ofsted.

The school is an Investor in People. It also holds the Healthy Schools Award and 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

This outstanding nursery school enables children to make exceptionally good progress, often from extremely low starting points. The Nursery is a magical place for children to be and in its stimulating, caring and supportive environment they thrive and develop enthusiasm for learning. The Nursery fully deserves the excellent reputation that it has in the locality as a beacon of good practice.

Children love coming to the Nursery. They become thoroughly involved in the learning activities provided for them because staff ensure that activities are firmly based on children's interests and needs. As a result, children make excellent progress. They learn at a fast pace and make equally good progress in all areas of learning. By the time they leave Nursery, most children have reached expected levels of attainment for their age group and are well on the way to meeting the goals set for the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children achieve particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development. Their welfare is exceptionally well provided for so that they feel safe and secure at all times. There is a clear focus on developing children's confidence and self-esteem. Their achievements are celebrated, praised and encouraged, with parents and carers drawn into the process of assessing how well their children are doing. Children are, rightly, proud of their 'special books' which provide a vivid ongoing record of the milestones in their achievement. They chat confidently about the photographs and samples of their work displayed in their books. 'My child has learned so many new things since being in Nursery, and so have I,' was a typical parental comment on the school's 'fantastic' provision. Children with additional learning needs are identified promptly and given excellent support. As a result, a significant proportion of children show a reduction in their level of need by the time they are ready to transfer to Reception classes.

Learning activities are outstanding because staff have an exceptionally good understanding of how children learn. Children have ample opportunities to investigate and discover new things for themselves. Provision to promote children's personal, social and emotional development is excellent. Staff have identified a need to enhance this further by finding appropriate ways to introduce relationships education so as to help children get on well with people as they grow up.

The Nursery continues to be highly effective. It was judged to be outstanding at the last inspection and has improved further since then. Outstanding leadership continues to inspire an excellent leadership team. The team successfully ensures staff and governors develop the skills and commitment that underpin and maintain the high-quality provision. This has a significant impact on children's attainment, achievement and

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progress. Self-evaluation is extremely good because of the ongoing focus on refining and adjusting provision to meet children's changing needs. This means the Nursery 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?

- Enhance provision to promote children's personal, social and emotional development by finding appropriate ways to include relationships education within the Nursery curriculum.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children**1**

Most children enter Nursery with skills well below those typical for their age, particularly in the key areas of speech and language. Despite this, children of all abilities are 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. The school's records for the past three years show that most children transferred from the Nursery to Reception classes having reached the expected levels for their age. All the children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as a new language, develop increasingly effective communication skills. This enables them to have thoughtful discussions with each other and with adults.

Children are extremely secure in the setting and enjoy trusting relationships with the very caring staff. Effective routines enable them to establish good and improving self-help and independence skills. Children's behaviour is extremely good. They are considerate and care for each other 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 talk about foods that are good for them. They love being the 'helper of the day' and carrying out responsibilities in their learning group. Children 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 children's needs. Children show a real interest in literacy activities. They love looking at books with an adult or a friend and they understand the difference between story books and 'finding out' books. They thoroughly 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. Their attendance is very good, reflecting the Nursery's excellent partnership with parents and carers. All of these factors indicate that children are prepared extremely well for the next stage in their education.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage**1**

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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	1
Taking into account: Children's attendance ¹	1
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Highly skilled practitioners work as a very effective team in the Nursery to achieve excellent outcomes for the children. Warm relationships and exemplary organisation of routines contribute very well to ensuring children feel secure. For example, staff take particular care at the start of each session to explain clearly to children the activities and events to come, what is expected of them and the choices they can make. Children whose speaking and listening skills are very immature, and those learning English as a new language, all benefit greatly from the additional help they are given. Small group teaching programmes are tailored carefully to their individual needs and this helps them to gain confidence and become fluent speakers. Very well designed provision to improve the physical coordination and control of less-able children contributes significantly to the excellent overall progress they make. The excellent planning includes continuous evaluation and review. This ensures that activities meet each child's needs exceptionally well. Assessment gives an excellent picture of individual children's progress. Key workers ensure that parents and carers are also involved in assessment. This means that parents and carers are very well-informed about how their children are doing. Learning activities are extremely well designed to capitalize on children's interests and promote exceptional levels of independence. There is a very good balance between activities chosen by the children and those led by adults. At the same time, 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. For example,

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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procedures for child protection and risk assessments fully meet government requirements. Outstanding induction arrangements and excellent relationships between staff, parents and carers help ensure pastoral care is of the highest quality. Links with the associated primary school and other local schools are extremely good, so that transition to Reception is managed exceptionally well. The support for children with particular needs and their families is of exceptionally high quality and is one reason why these children are very happy in the Nursery and make excellent progress. The Nursery works productively with a large number of external agencies and often takes a leading role in collaborative action to support individual families.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
	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 in the Nursery embraces staff and governors, all of whom wholeheartedly share the headteacher's clear vision for taking the Nursery forward to achieve the best possible outcomes for its children.

At the time of the inspection, safeguarding was seen to be given extremely high priority, with staff and governors showing excellent awareness of safeguarding issues and with highly effective procedures in place.

Leaders and managers know the school extremely well and are continuously seeking ways to improve it even further by setting the highest expectations of themselves and the children and by finding innovative ways to develop and enhance provision. Currently, for example, staff are exploring new and appropriate ways to bring relationships education into the Nursery curriculum to further support the children's outstanding personal, social and emotional development. Across the team there is a dedication to removing barriers to learning and celebrating the achievements of the children at every stage. As a result, the Nursery is highly inclusive and is very effective in improving children's life chances 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 detailed knowledge of how provision is working and individual governors work closely with the extremely effective headteacher and her staff to review

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and evaluate the impact of the various aspects of the Nursery's work. This is instrumental in ensuring that the work of the Nursery is of high quality. Children and their families benefit greatly from the way the Nursery reaches out to parents and carers as partners in their children's learning and from the way in which it helps to ensure that different agencies work especially closely together. For example, the Nursery regularly hosts case conferences on behalf of vulnerable children. The school promotes community cohesion actively and extremely well through its partnership with parents, its extensive community links, through its activities as a training school for student practitioners, through its very good relationship with the children's centre and local schools and playgroups, 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

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	1
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

About one third of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. All of those who responded said they 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.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Burnwood 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 inspector received 19 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 59 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	89	2	11	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	95	1	5	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	84	3	16	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	79	4	21	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	89	2	11	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	89	2	11	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	74	5	26	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)	12	63	4	21	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	84	3	16	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	74	4	21	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	79	3	16	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	84	3	16	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	100	0	0	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



11 November 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Burnwood Nursery School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 6PB

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

- Burnwood is an excellent Nursery. You learn lots of interesting things and there are plenty of really exciting activities for you to get involved in.
- The grown-ups in Nursery look after you extremely well. Your mums and dads think so too and they are very pleased with how well you are doing in Nursery.
- You are very well behaved children. You are very 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 work very hard to make the Nursery as good as it can possibly be. I have asked them to think of some more ideas that will help you to get on well with other people as you grow up.

Keep trying hard!

With my very best wishes to you and your families

Yours sincerely

Mrs Diane Auton

Lead inspector

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