

Brougham Street Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121268
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	380197
Inspection dates	20–21 March 2012
Lead inspector	Sarah Quinn

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	65
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Donna Alderson
Headteacher	Angela Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	3 December 2008
School address	Brougham Street Skipton BD23 2ES
Telephone number	01609 797053
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Introduction

Inspection team

Sarah Quinn

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector spent six hours and twenty-five minutes either observing direct teaching and independent, continuous learning or discussing and observing individual children at play. Two teaching staff and two practitioners were seen and spoken to. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, parents and carers, staff and children. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at observation, assessment and planning records, policies and management documentation in relation to safeguarding and health and safety. She scrutinised examples of children's 'learning journeys' and the school tracking systems for all children as well as other documentation relating to achievement. She took account of questionnaires completed by staff and 34 parents and carers. The inspector looked at the online questionnaire (Parent View) but there were insufficient responses to aid the planning of the inspection.

Information about the school

The nursery school is smaller than average. Most children join the school immediately after their third birthday and, therefore, admissions are ongoing throughout the year. Children attend on a flexible basis and with a variety of patterns of provision matched to the needs of individual families. The proportion of children with special educational needs, including speech and language, is high. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals is low. A small number of children speak English as an additional language.

There have been significant changes to the governing body and key staff in recent months. The school is located within Skipton Children's Centre. The governing body is also responsible for the registered provision on site which provides childcare for children from birth. This setting was inspected in 2010 and the report is available on the Ofsted website. The children's centre also receives its own inspection available on the same 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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Although improving, the school is not yet good because provision is not yet leading to good achievement. Monitoring and evaluation by senior leaders is not focused well enough on outcomes for children to ensure they make rapid progress.
- Children achieve satisfactorily from starting points that are below those expected nationally. For those with speech and language difficulties, achievement in communication, language and literacy is good as they receive very well delivered and focused speech and language support. Systems to track children’s progress have not been maintained well enough to enable senior leaders to check with full accuracy on how much progress each child is making.
- The use of the outdoor area for learning is a strength. It is a delight to children who enjoy using their own ideas to explore and play creatively, developing their language, numeracy and problem-solving skills well. Good teaching was seen on inspection but, because of a period of staff changes, teaching is satisfactory over time.
- Children typically behave well in the nursery and clearly enjoy school, although their behaviour slips at times when the school’s behaviour management strategies are not followed and staff fail to make clear their expectations, for instance at tidy-up time.
- Senior leaders, including the governing body, have effectively steered the school through a period of staffing turbulence. Together with the newly formed staff team they have made a good start to implementing improvements to teaching, learning, planning and record keeping, but observations and assessment systems are still not giving a clear enough picture of each child’s progress in all areas of learning. Management of performance has improved some aspects of teaching and all staff are committed to further improvements. However, strategic planning for improvement lacks criteria by which to measure success.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Inject more rigour into all monitoring activities to ensure that the intended improvement to children's learning and achievement is rapid by:
 - increasing the focus on how well children learn in lessons when monitoring the quality of teaching
 - monitoring the observation, assessment and planning cycles, and children's learning journeys to ensure activities fully meet the needs of all children at all times
 - ensuring the nursery lead teacher has time to reflect, assess and re-evaluate the effectiveness of the setting regularly with staff.
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of strategic planning by:
 - ensuring whole-school development planning has precise, measureable success criteria linked firmly to children's progress and achievement.
- Implement a consistent approach to behaviour management and continually review and monitor its effectiveness to ensure ongoing effectiveness and positive impact on children's behaviour.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Most children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals so that by the time they leave the nursery they are generally meeting the expectations for their age.

The majority of parents and carers say that they are pleased with the progress their children make. Inspection findings show that although children now usually learn well in lessons, over time their progress is satisfactory. This is because the many changes in staffing have resulted in variable maintenance of the observation, assessment and planning cycle. The impact of this is that children's achievement has been inconsistent and planned activities have not always met their needs. This has improved in recent weeks with the continuation of a varied and exciting curriculum based upon children's interests and needs. Children who have special educational needs are making good progress and this is because focused support is effective. In some cases they make better progress than their peers.

The majority of children enjoy learning, particularly when tasks are engaging. During the inspection, they eagerly prepared planters outside with compost and explored worms and centipedes, using magnifying glasses expanding their knowledge of the world around them. Outdoor play is a strength, and skilled practitioners allow children the space and time to plan and act upon their ideas. For example, they built a house using blocks and chose to paint the house, resourcing their own play well. They thoroughly enjoyed opportunities to explore and play creatively as they pretended to look after babies in the home area and built a 'fire engine' to ride on together. Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy are promoted through games and group activities and children use their learning as they negotiate heavy objects over obstacles together or sing counting songs to each other. Photographs show exciting creative activities where children splash in the mud and use powder paints to make

rainbow patterns in the rain. Children choose to sit and read stories together and enjoy using teddy bears to act out fairy stories. They learn listening skills very well and systematically learn letters and sounds as part of focused activities with adults.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers feel that teaching in the school is good and meets the needs of their children. Although the teaching seen during inspection was good, over time it is satisfactory. The best sessions are well planned and exciting activities are designed to motivate and involve children fully in their learning, and expectations are high. For instance, in the 'Ginger Bear' group, a focused session for children with speech and language needs, practitioners know children well and adapt the session to meet their needs. This session was effective in developing their speaking, listening and thinking skills. Good lessons such as these also focus on, and evaluate, learning outcomes to enable practitioners to adapt future tasks so that children's skills and knowledge are built upon.

A broad range of activities allows children to choose what they enjoy and supports all areas of learning. There is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning and practitioners recognise the importance of this and plan for it well. When teaching is less successful, inconsistencies creep in. For instance, on occasions, groups with a teacher are too large and children have to wait for their turn, slowing the pace of learning. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported through well-planned activities that promote children's emotional development such as giving children time to reflect, and talking about their feelings. They are encouraged to think carefully about what they would like to learn and staff help them. They also learn about right and wrong from staff and visitors such as the local police officers.

Some practitioners track children's progress in all areas of learning effectively through focused observations linked to areas of learning and observations take account of children's interests. This is particularly the case for children receiving one-to-one support or with identified special educational needs. However, this is not consistent. There are gaps in some children's individual records and so staff are not always able to effectively plan for the next steps in children's learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Children feel safe in school and, although a very small minority of parents and carers expressed some concern about safety, the inspection found that the environment is safe and well managed and that the school responds very quickly to concerns and incidents.

Observations confirm that, when sessions are exciting and motivate children, behaviour is good and children engage well in their learning. However, during routines such as 'tidying-up time', practitioners are busy tidying up themselves rather than encouraging children's self-discipline through positive reinforcement. At these times some children's behaviour deteriorates, as practitioners are not a visible presence in the room and there is no clear implementation of the agreed behaviour management strategy.

Children are developing an understanding of the risks to which they may be exposed, both within and outside school, and they know how to stay safe and healthy. They assess risk well at their own stage of development and practitioners give them the space to try activities and modify equipment to support them. Children enjoy attending nursery.

Children respond positively to the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are beginning to understand the 'right thing to do' and are starting to take on responsibilities such as helping practitioners with little jobs. Fund-raising, links with the local community and activities and discussions to celebrate children's backgrounds raise awareness about cultural diversity and empathy for people in the community.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and the governing body have effectively managed a period of rapid change. The whole staff team share a drive for improvement and are committed to ensuring that all children can achieve their full potential. A secure cycle of performance management has begun to inform the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation processes.

Although for a while, the headteacher was responsible for day-to-day management, this has now passed to the new team leader and there is now a greater focus on monitoring teaching and learning. However, monitoring still lacks sufficient focus on children's learning outcomes when teaching is monitored, and monitoring of aspects such as the implementation of the behaviour management policy has not always been rigorous enough.

Good partnership work with other organisations, particularly the children's centre, ensures that staff gain knowledge and refresh their skills through professional development sessions and observation of practice elsewhere. This has been particularly successful in developing outdoor play, creativity and support for children who have special educational needs. The use of data from assessments is now being used to gain a better overview of the impact of provision on outcomes for children across the school. However, because systems for assessment and record keeping are being changed, this has not yet had time to impact fully on children's progress. Regular senior leadership team meetings are contributing to an improvement in the consistency and quality of management systems but meetings for staff led by the nursery team leader are less frequent and this means that practitioners are not always able to review their practice.

Members of the governing body have a wide variety of skills and expertise. They are developing their effectiveness and beginning to offer challenge and support to the school in equal measure. They are starting to be informed through representations from staff during the year, but are not yet taking an active role in monitoring the school's performance. The strategic direction of the school addresses the immediate issues for the school but targets are not precise with measurable success criteria linked to children's achievement. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and conduct health and safety reviews responding quickly to identified issues, like the door release buttons being initially within children's reach. Leaders satisfactorily promote equality of opportunity, as can be seen by their support for pupils with special educational needs. Diversity is celebrated and discrimination is not tolerated. There are good programmes to promote children's emotional well-being. Strengths in the curriculum include planning for outdoor play, for creativity and for developing children's confidence to solve problems. These also support children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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 pupils. 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a child in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the children’s work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well children behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Children’s punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the children’s attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe children are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Children’s freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



22 March 2012

Dear Children

Inspection of Brougham Street Nursery School, Skipton BD23 2ES

Thank you very much for making me feel so welcome when I came to visit the nursery school. You have a lovely time and you learn lots and lots every day. I know this because you smile a lot and laugh together all day. I judged that your nursery school is satisfactory.

Your teachers think that you are very special and work very hard to make sure the activities you enjoy every day are exciting. I have asked them to really think about all the things they plan for you to make sure they help you to learn by watching how well you are doing regularly.

You generally behave well but sometimes forget to help with jobs such as tidying up. You know how to keep yourselves safe. I enjoyed watching you climbing outside and jumping and skipping together. You are very good at using tools like spades to dig up the worms.

To make your school even better, I have asked your headteacher to watch what is happening at the nursery and to work with the teachers to find ways to make everything even better. You can help your headteacher by telling her the things you like to do.

Carry on working hard and enjoying playing together and I know you will all continue to enjoy nursery.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Quinn
Lead inspector

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