

Stoneyholme Nursery School

March Street, Burnley, Lancashire, BB12 0BU

Inspection dates 16–17 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children enjoy taking part in a wide range of activities so they soon become enthusiastic learners. This helps them to make good progress and to achieve well.
- Children who are at a very early stage of learning English are supported well by teachers and teaching assistants who together speak several languages. This helps children to play a full part in school life.
- Teaching is good. Adults successfully help children develop important skills and help them to grow in confidence.
- Parents are happy with the good quality education that their children are receiving.
- Children are busy, sociable and enthusiastic. They enjoy the welcoming and caring environment where they can play and work safely. Their behaviour is good and this helps them to learn well.
- The curriculum provides exciting opportunities for children both in the classroom and outdoors. Children have the chance to visit the zoo and see farm animals, making trips outside their own community.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and knows the school well. She is very well supported by all the staff and the governing body. Together they are committed to doing the very best for the children.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes adults do not ask children enough questions to encourage them to think even harder.
- There are not enough opportunities for children to learn numbers and shapes or how to use these when they are playing outdoors.
- There are occasions when children are working on their own or in small groups and adults do not always check that they fully understand what they have to do.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed one teacher and four teaching assistants during eight lessons which included a joint lesson observation with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the senior teacher, the special educational needs coordinator, children, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed children's work, shared books with them and talked with children about their different activities.
- A range of the school's documentation was examined, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, documents relating to the school development plan, systems for tracking children's progress, documents regarding safeguarding and key policies.
- The inspector took account of the 66 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the views of parents who spoke with the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector analysed questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Sue Sharkey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Stoneyholme Nursery is an average-sized nursery school.
- The school provides morning and afternoon sessions and admits children to the nursery following their third birthday.
- All children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and are learning English as an additional language.
- A few children are currently supported at early years action and early years action plus.
- The school runs a pre-school group from 9.30am to 11.20am on four mornings a week for children who are three years old but who do not yet attend nursery.
- The senior teacher joined the school in September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to outstanding in order to improve children's progress further by:
 - developing adults' questioning skills so that they regularly ask children questions that make them think even harder
 - ensuring that there is always an adult available to help children, if needed, when they are working independently
 - providing more opportunities outdoors for children to develop early mathematical skills through play.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the Nursery where they have the chance to try out lots of new activities as well as those they enjoy each day. They take turns and happily share toys and equipment. Every day, children are encouraged to enjoy books through daily story times in small groups. Some children say they particularly like books with animals.
- Stories are used regularly to help children learn not just early reading skills but also to provide excellent opportunities to talk and learn new words to help them learn to speak English. Children are able to borrow books as well as to take toys home. Throughout the Nursery, books are available for children to look at and share. Children show that they care for books; they turn the pages carefully and laugh when they see a funny picture. They are able to retell their favourite stories and join in with words or sentences they remember.
- Children start school with skills that are below those typical for their age, particularly in speaking and listening, reading, writing and personal and social development.
- Every day, children make the most of good opportunities to work on their own with an adult or in a small group to develop specific skills. As a result, children, including disabled children and those with special educational needs, as well as speaking English as an additional language, make good progress especially in speaking and listening, reading, writing, personal, social and physical development.
- Children often respond to adults' explanations and questions with actions or gestures rather than by talking to show that they have learned and how much they understand.
- A small group of boys at the afternoon session have been making slower progress than other children. They are now learning at a faster rate due to the specific help the staff are providing.
- Adults plan activities well. For example, when children work each day with their key person they begin the early stages of writing or say and count numbers. Children can identify and say numbers up to 10 and count the letters in their name. Outdoors, they run around, ride vehicles and explore ways across the climbing frame. There are, however, missed opportunities for children to use and practise their early mathematical skills outdoors.
- Children who speak little or no English when they start are slower to develop their speaking skills. Staff explain and speak to children in both English and the language children speak at home. This helps them to succeed with new learning and skills such as cutting with scissors or using a knife for the first time. For example, children thoroughly enjoy snack time when they can choose and pour their own drink, decide what they would like on their sandwich then use a knife to spread the sandwich filling.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is typically good with some examples of high-quality practice. They plan well together to make sure that there are exciting activities for all groups of children. This helps to keep children's interest so that they want to learn new things as well as helping them to learn new words and develop their speaking.
- Teachers and teaching assistants show how important it is to be friendly and caring. This helps children to enjoy working and playing together well.
- Staff make good use of books in English as well as other languages to support children and families who do not speak English at home. Most of the staff speak at least two languages and this expertise is used frequently during activities to make sure that children fully understand what they have to do.
- On most occasions, even though staff are busy encouraging children to learn, they do check that children are involved in activities. However, occasionally staff do not check closely enough, when children are playing without adult support, that the children fully understand what they have to

do. This slows the pace of their learning.

- Staff make sure that classrooms are bright, cheerful and show off children's work. This helps the rooms to be inviting for children, helping them to enjoy their learning.
- Teachers make very good use of the outdoors where there are several areas for children to explore. Even though it was cold during the inspection, adults encouraged children to wrap-up well and to wander through the willow tunnel, listen to sounds of birds and to find out if the peanuts left out for them had been eaten.
- Adults are skilful at encouraging children to solve problems. For example, in a different outdoor area, children were surprised to find some of the toys stuck in a plastic basket. The teacher asked very good questions to encourage the children to talk about why they were stuck and what they should do. They quickly identified the ice in the bottom of the basket and worked together to carry some water and melt the ice. There are occasions when staff ask questions of a high quality but this is not consistent enough to always extend children's learning and to help them to explore new words and ideas.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Relationships between children and staff are a real strength and this helps children to enjoy their learning and develop confidence. Questionnaire responses and discussions with parents confirm that children are happy in school.
- Children are polite, have good manners and behave well. They learn to play well together and there are no recorded incidents of bullying. Staff encourage children to talk about their feelings. Children talk about how different children look in the pictures teachers show them. They also discuss how they might feel if, for example, they look happy or sad.
- Children help to tidy up and get the Nursery ready for the next group of children to use. They put books away carefully and take sand out of the toy diggers so that they are ready to be used again.
- Attendance is typical for children of this age but over the last term it has risen. The school checks children's daily attendance to see if there is a pattern of when children do not attend. They are working closely with parents to help them understand the importance of children being in school each day.

The leadership and management are good

- The strong-minded leadership of the headteacher has successfully maintained and improved the strengths of the school as judged at the previous inspection. Although recently appointed, the senior teacher has already introduced some changes, particularly the way the school is checking how well different groups of children are doing. She is also helping teaching assistants to become more responsible for the daily planning of their groups.
- Both the headteacher and the senior teacher check teaching often through lesson observations and looking at teaching assistants' planning. As a result, teaching is typically good and, on occasions, outstanding. To help improve teaching, all staff benefit from regular training often led by school leaders.
- The school works closely with the local authority who, for example, supported the school recently when appointing the senior teacher.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well and this is reflected in the range of activities that children can enjoy so that they make good progress.
- There is a strong partnership with parents. Recently, the school has introduced workshops for parents to help them understand their children's learning and to give them opportunities to meet each other and the school staff. These have been very successful, well supported and are to continue. In their response to the on-line questionnaire, parents overwhelmingly agreed that they would recommend the school to others.

■ The curriculum is well planned with a wide range of extra activities through visits out and visitors to school. Children learn to grow vegetables and how to look after plants. There are many celebrations in school including Christmas, both Eids and Diwali. These all help to promote children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

■ **The governance of the school:**

– Governors have a good understanding of how well the school is doing. They know what the school is good at as well as how it can get better. The governing body carries out checks informally in the classrooms and talks with staff regularly. It is aware of staff responsibilities, has an accurate view of teaching and is aware of the importance of salary scales. Together with the headteacher, it makes sure that all teachers and teaching staff have their performance checked each year and that any aims set help the school continue to improve. The governing body has a good grasp of the school budget, making sure that money is spent wisely to help to support children in order to ensure that they achieve well. It ensures that safeguarding arrangements are in place and that the school is safe and secure.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	119074
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	401802

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	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sher Ali Miah
Headteacher	Mari Nearney
Date of previous school inspection	10 February 2010
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