

# Stoneyholme Nursery School

March Street, Burnley, Lancashire BB12 0BU

## Inspection dates

7-8 June 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher is a deeply skilled, knowledgeable and passionate leader. She understands what high-quality nursery education looks like and has a detailed knowledge of the needs of the local community. She uses her insights exceptionally well to challenge and improve the work of staff, who give children the best possible start to their education. The work of the school is excellent and improving.
- Staff assess children's abilities thoroughly, frequently and accurately. The teaching that children experience is exciting and meaningful. It is planned and reviewed very carefully.
- Resources are superb and the classrooms are exciting places in which to learn. Staff and leaders make extra sure that every aspect of the school's environment is well planned and used for learning. Wonderful displays on the walls of the school celebrate children's learning extremely positively.
- Teamwork among staff is first-rate. Maximum use is made of the skills of each individual to plan, review and improve teaching, children's learning and the overall work of the school.
- While governors support and challenge leaders and staff well, the school can achieve even more if governors ask leaders better questions about the achievement of children.
- During their time at Stoneyholme, children make excellent progress in their knowledge, skills and attitudes. They become confident, enthusiastic learners. The children learn quickly to respect one another and understand what makes them similar to and different from other children. Their behaviour at school is of a high standard. Some children do not attend nursery school as often as they should.
- Support for children who speak English as an additional language is excellent. Children develop their speech, language and communication abilities very quickly.
- Children develop crucial skills in experimenting, finding out and learning with other children. They gain many important abilities in mathematics and this aspect of their learning is now a strength of the school.
- Staff make excellent use of the nursery garden as part of children's daily learning. The rain is no barrier to children and staff at the school. All dress appropriately and explore fully, whatever the weather. Two-year-olds, as much as their older peers, gain great benefit from learning outdoors.
- Provision made for the care and education of two-year-old children is of a high quality. Staff work very skilfully to support the youngest children and their parents. As a result, two-year-old children flourish at Stoneyholme.

## **Full report**

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

- Develop the skills of governors to ask more precise questions about the achievement of children based on the extensive information they receive.
- Make sure that current work with parents results in children attending school regularly.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The headteacher and lead teacher have a deep knowledge of how young children develop and learn. They are very well informed about national requirements for the education of children aged two to five, as well as current research about teaching and learning. They make excellent use of this knowledge to challenge one another and staff about what the school does to educate children attending this school. Their approach is all about the pursuit of excellence; they are determined to provide children and families with the highest-quality nursery education.
- Leaders have a deep understanding of the school. Self-evaluation is accurate, thorough and sophisticated. It is used to focus sharply on what should be improved. Leaders make sure that reviews of the work of the staff include collaboration with experts from outside the school. This ensures that the school is connected closely to what is happening more widely across schools. Leaders' knowledge is used with great effect to benefit Stoneyholme.
- The leadership of provision for two-year-olds is excellent because leaders are so skilled, knowledgeable and passionate about developing high-quality care and learning for the youngest children. Provision is planned, delivered and reviewed extremely skilfully.
- Leaders model high-quality teaching and make sure that staff have excellent access to training and opportunities to develop and improve their work. Targets to improve the work of staff, including teaching assistants, are used very successfully to improve teaching. Under the leadership of the new headteacher and senior teacher, the quality of teaching has risen to outstanding since the previous inspection. Children are learning exceptionally well.
- Staff are unafraid to take on additional responsibilities, review their work and try new ways of working. Teamwork is excellent. Staff trust leaders fully and choose to have their work recorded on video and then used to identify points for improvement.
- Leaders have high expectations of themselves and of staff and this shows in the beautiful resources and environment set out thoughtfully for children's daily use. Exemplary displays of children's learning are evident throughout the school and illustrate just how much the school values children's drawing, writing, comments and activities. This high level of care is evident in much of the school's work, for example in the quality of records about special educational needs and individual children's assessment files.
- Leaders plan, spend and review pupil premium funding very carefully. This enables disadvantaged children to make outstanding progress in their learning.
- The curriculum is of a high quality. Children's activities are developed with much care and thought. Great use is made of the indoor and outdoor environment. Children benefit from extensive opportunities to learn in the nursery garden. Staff are given extra training to help children light fires, climb trees, make dens and identify trees and insects. Books, stories, songs, visits and visitors are also key parts of the planned experiences for children. Children's learning and their progress is excellent.
- The small amount of additional funding to support children who have special

educational needs and/or disabilities is used very well to provide extra help for their learning. The skilful work of the special needs coordinator makes sure that children's needs are met very successfully.

- Leaders and staff give extensive attention to promoting children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge. For example, children are taught to celebrate and understand their own faith, as well as to understand the beliefs and traditions of others. The work of artists from different religions and continents is celebrated throughout activities, as well as in wall displays throughout the school. Children from different cultures and backgrounds get on very well with one another. As a consequence, children are very well prepared for the opportunities presented by life in the diverse world of Burnley, as well as in modern Britain.
- Given the high quality of teaching and outcomes achieved and the extremely careful management of school resources, the school offers excellent value for money. The provision is worthy of wider dissemination. The capacity of the school to keep on improving and its potential to further help other schools and settings to improve is very clear.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors take their responsibilities seriously. They visit the school regularly and are fully behind the vision of the headteacher to improve the lives of local children and their families. Governors use their wide range of skills to good effect to check the work of leaders and of staff. They now have individual responsibilities which they focus on when reviewing the work of the school, for example considering how well the school engages with fathers, or how well it meets health and safety requirements.
- Governors check safeguarding arrangements at the school regularly. They make sure that national requirements, as set out, for example, in 'Keeping children safe in education', are fulfilled.
- Governors keep school finances under careful review. They work with the headteacher to address the key strategic challenges facing the school, particularly the imminent external changes to school funding which are set to reduce the school budget by almost half.
- Governors receive detailed information from the headteacher about the work of staff and leaders. While they ask challenging questions, and are unafraid to ask for more explanation and evidence, they do not always analyse the information they receive about the achievement of children with sufficient rigour.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff and governors are trained very successfully about safeguarding. Besides annual training, the designated safeguarding lead gives staff regular updates, during which they are encouraged to discuss sensitive issues at length and to learn from one another. The individual challenges facing every child in the nursery are reviewed frequently by the whole staff team. The lead for safeguarding is highly trained in helping staff with their roles to support children and families.
- Leaders make sure that the specific needs of two-year-old children are given high

priority and that all staff know how to educate and care for the youngest children.

- Staff have a good knowledge of local and national safeguarding issues and leaders check staff's knowledge regularly. Staff know how to spot possible issues and how to record and report their concerns about children and adults.
- Leaders keep a careful overview of all emerging issues about children's protection and welfare. School safeguarding records are maintained to a high standard. Referrals to other professionals for advice are prompt and appropriate.
- Child protection policies from the local authority are adapted appropriately to suit the school's needs and updated regularly by leaders and governors.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Outstanding

- The quality of teaching, including for two-year-olds, is now excellent. This reflects the skilled work of the whole team.
- Each day at nursery, lessons are full of singing, dancing, looking at books, learning to write and playing with number resources. Children are encouraged to learn through investigation and solving problems. Staff are highly skilled at seizing on children's interests to make learning as interesting as possible. Across the nursery, children show deep involvement in their learning and high emotional well-being.
- Children's writing skills are developing quickly because of the many times staff model and explain writing to children and then give them opportunities to practise. For example, during the inspection, two-year-olds frequently and confidently chose to sit together on the floor at an easel, making meaningful marks with large pens and practising holding pens. They want to write and are keen to try for themselves.
- The quality of the new provision for two-year-olds is excellent. Children are cared for and educated very well. These young children receive an excellent start to their learning at nursery school. The selection and arrangement of resources set out around the nursery rooms is organised extremely effectively to meet the needs of all ages. Staff plan the routine of each day very carefully. Children benefit from excellent support from staff to help them play cooperatively with others.
- Staff are deeply interested in how children learn. They review the quality of teaching frequently as well as checking on children's progress. Teachers and teaching assistants are quick to spot and respond if children are falling behind. They celebrate the significant steps that children make in their skills and understanding. This high level of care is shown by the exemplary standard of assessment records and displays of children's learning throughout the school.
- Staff recognise that local children have limited opportunities at home for learning in a garden or park environment. In response, teachers make frequent and extensive use of the well-developed outdoor area. For example, two-year-olds were observed experimenting by making different colours and smelling pots of water. Supported sensitively by a member of staff, children discussed and extended their knowledge of the smells and colours created.
- Given that most children are at the early stages of learning English, staff are highly skilled at teaching them to become confident in their speech, language and

communication. For all children, staff model language very clearly, listen to children carefully and use questions precisely. For example, a member of staff spoke to a child in Bengali then repeated herself in English. She smiled and waited patiently for his response and then warmly acknowledged his comments. As a result, he was thrilled with his part in the activity and learned new language in a meaningful way.

- Mathematics is planned, taught and evaluated very well. It is now a strength of the school's provision. Leaders make sure that recent national research about mathematics is used to help staff consider how best to teach children to count, recognise and make patterns, identify and solve problems and to name and create shapes. As a result, mathematics teaching makes thoughtful use of games, food and household objects to enhance children's understanding.
- Parents are kept fully up to date about their children's learning and they value the workshops the school provides about helping children to read.
- Throughout the nursery, children grow in their early reading skills and use books with skill and confidence. For example, outdoors in the rain, a child was using a reference book to identify the snail she had found. With the skilled help of the teacher, she was engrossed in using the book and extending her language as she worked.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Resources and furniture in the classrooms are arranged by staff with much thought and care. Throughout the inspection children were deeply involved in their play and activities, calmly enjoying learning with staff and other children.
- Across the nursery, children feel very good about themselves and their lives. They love being at nursery, learning with their friends and being part of their small group led by their key person. The nursery is an oasis of calm and purposeful learning.
- Children know how to be a successful learner. They contribute well and they listen carefully to one another. They respect, and are interested in, the views of others.
- Two-year-old children are happy to join in activities with their older peers because staff have helped them develop their confidence and assertiveness.
- Children know how to stay safe, for example when using the internet, when using mallets to hammer pieces of wood in the nursery garden, as well as when climbing trees. There are no instances of bullying and children know to tell staff if they are unhappy about the actions of other children.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of children is outstanding. They listen extremely well to staff and respond quickly to staff requests and guidance. The children conduct themselves impeccably, for example when meeting visitors. They are kind, cooperative and willing to share when they play together.

- Where individual children need support to manage their own feelings or behaviour, staff have clearly-understood arrangements in place to give extra help. As a result, children know how to make sensible choices about how they act. Relationships between children and their key member of staff are extremely positive and help children to develop good self-control.
- Children are kind to one another. They show great respect for differences between themselves and others, for example including children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in their play. This is because staff set a very clear and positive example to them of how to behave.
- The beautifully arranged classrooms and outdoor areas are maintained very effectively by staff. Tidy-up times involve all staff and children working together to return resources to their proper places for storage. Following such a positive example, children take great care of the nursery environment. They are proud of their nursery and want to keep it special.
- Children arrive at school promptly each session. They are full of enthusiasm for learning. Staff make sure that all children are welcomed warmly. Lessons, including for two-year-olds, begin with a music and dancing activity where children show great cooperation and expression. They move to other activities keenly and calmly. Lessons indoors and outdoors happen without disruption because children enjoy school so much.
- Leaders check and follow up children's absences thoroughly and promptly. Persistent absence from school is very rare. Clear messages are shared with parents about the importance of attendance as helpful preparation for primary school. Nonetheless, children's overall level of attendance is good rather than excellent. This is because some families take extended holidays abroad. Leaders are pursuing clear steps to raise attendance further but it is too soon to see the impact of this work.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- Most children's wider skills and knowledge are well below those typical for their age when they come to school for the first time. Many children require feeding from a bottle, lack skills to toilet themselves and exhibit high levels of anxiety when separating from their parents. Skilled, sensitive help from staff is making sure that children develop the personal, social and emotional skills they need to learn well. Extensive work at home and school, on children's toileting skills, means that children are rapidly becoming much more responsible for their own personal care.
- A large majority of children start nursery school with no knowledge of English. Other children have a limited understanding or use of English. Staff report that children's skills in their first language are also at an early stage of development. Children who speak English as an additional language make great strides forward in their listening skills, their understanding of language and their ability to speak. This is because of the many wonderful opportunities they are given to learn and practise language. They want to speak because learning at nursery is exciting. They are confident to try new words because staff are skilled and sensitive at encouraging their efforts. As a result, children catch up rapidly with their peers in school in their language skills.

- Two-year-old children have a wonderful head start to their learning. Their abilities grow quickly because of the well-planned, sensitive and skilful support of staff. This is enabling the youngest children to participate in activities in the three-year-old provision with much confidence and eagerness. Parents report that this is helping their children to settle quickly when moving classes at nursery.
- Across subjects, the proportion of children at typical levels of development shoots up from just a few on entry to most children by the time they leave. Given children's low starting points and their short time attending nursery school, this represents outstanding progress. Over time, the proportion of children leaving nursery ready for primary school has increased sharply since the previous inspection. This is helping local primary schools to boost children's abilities further, by the end of the Reception Year, across the areas of learning.
- After starting nursery with limited confidence, children quickly become autonomous, self-assured learners. They are keen to investigate and 'have a go'. They are flourishing because of the skilled, sensitive support of staff. Children love coming to school. They are excited by what they can explore, discover and find out.
- Children are learning quickly to recognise shapes, mathematical patterns and numbers. Due to the frequent and meaningful mathematical games used in nursery, the most able children are learning to recognise instantly the number of objects in a small group without the need to count them. Many children are learning to be confident to solve problems for themselves or with friends.
- Children are learning a wide range of songs and rhymes that help them with their understanding of language, as well as the sounds that letters make. The most able three- and four-year-olds are learning relevant letter sounds, for example in the letters that make up their names. They are confident to make meaningful marks to represent letters and words.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities flourish while at the school. They make great and individually significant strides forward because they are valued, supported and included fully in activities by staff and by other children.
- Children supported with extra help through early years pupil premium funding make very strong progress. This enables them to do as well as, and at times better than, other children.
- Children's physical skills and their creative abilities prosper because of the high level of attention staff give to developing children's individual knowledge and understanding.

## School details

Unique reference number	119074
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10003839

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	103
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Sher Ali Miah
Headteacher	Mrs Shamim Ashraf
Telephone number	01282 454 473
Website	<a href="http://www.stoneyholmenurseryschool.co.uk">www.stoneyholmenurseryschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@stoneyholme-nur.lancs.sch.uk">head@stoneyholme-nur.lancs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	16–17 January 2013

## Information about this school

- Stoneyholme is an average-sized nursery school providing education and care for children aged two to four.
- Almost all children are from minority ethnic groups, with a majority being of Bangladeshi heritage.
- Almost all children speak English as an additional language.
- A small number of children are supported through early years pupil premium funding.
- The school has identified 13% of children as having special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The headteacher and the teacher were appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school provides support and training to a wide range of schools and early years settings. The school is a strategic partner in a teaching school led by Tor View School.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed the work of staff and conducted a series of joint observations, indoors and outdoors, with the headteacher.
- The inspector reviewed information about the achievement of past and current children at the school. He considered reviews of how well the school is doing; information from the school's own checks on the quality of teaching and learning; targets for staff and plans for improvement.
- The inspector talked to parents, including a parent governor, as they brought their children to school. There were no responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. The inspector considered information from a school survey of parent views.
- The inspector met with five members of the governing body, including the chair.
- The inspector checked policies and records about the care and protection of children.
- The inspector met with a range of staff, including those working specifically with two-year-olds. The inspector met with a representative of Lancashire local authority.

## Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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