

# Rainhill Community Nursery

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131447
<b>Local Authority</b>	St. Helens
<b>Inspection number</b>	293756
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clare Henderson

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>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	70
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cllr M Doyle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Mavis Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 February 2002
<b>School address</b>	Deepdale Drive Rainhill Prescot Merseyside L35 4NW
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 4931129
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 4931220

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This small Nursery school is attended by children of Rainhill and its surrounding villages. Most children attend the Nursery part-time, either in the morning or afternoon, though a small proportion attends full-time. Most of the children are White British and a small proportion of children of minority ethnic heritage families are learning English as an additional language. A few children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Proposals are in place to develop the Nursery into a small Children's Centre in October 2007.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school that provides good value for money. There are significant strengths, not least children's outstanding personal development, which reflects the excellent quality of care, guidance and support they receive. It is successful in providing the children with a creative and imaginative start to their education. This view is borne out by most parents who are delighted with its work. They make comments such as, 'The staff are well organised and provide a multitude of opportunities for creative learning.' The school is very effective in developing children so that they become happy and secure within themselves, interact skilfully with one another and are highly receptive to learning.

Achievement is good. Most children enter the Nursery at or above the level expected at that age. The majority of them reach standards that are well above average in all areas of learning by the time they move to full-time education. This is as a result of the good quality teaching they receive.

Much of the learning comes from independent and spontaneous exploration within an indoor and outdoor environment that is carefully planned to stimulate children's imagination and develop their problem solving skills. As a result children discover that learning is an exciting activity that stems from their own experience. This is delivered through a lively curriculum which meets the learning needs of most children effectively. However, on occasions, staff do not provide the children with enough challenge during discussion times to promote their thinking and learning further. The curriculum is enriched by a wide programme of visits and visitors which strengthen children's personal development very well. Inspectors agree with the school's view of its effectiveness. However, managers have been overly modest in some judgments.

Links with parents, the community and neighbouring schools are outstanding. Relationships between adults and children are exemplary so that children's self-esteem is continuously raised and they are encouraged to develop their curiosity and to fulfil the impulse to learn.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the work of the school and has been successful within her short time in post in motivating all the staff to work as an effective team. Good systems are in place for observing and recording children's attainment by staff on a day to day basis. However, the information gathered is not always used well enough by school leaders and governors to monitor and track the achievement children make whilst in the Nursery. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the quality of the outdoor provision and in use of the indoor space. The school is well placed to further improve as it prepares for its establishment as a small Children's Centre. Governors provide good support and commitment to the school, such as in the planning of the forthcoming Children's Centre. However, they are not sufficiently involved in the tracking of children's achievements.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that school leaders, including governors, contribute fully to the monitoring and tracking of children's achievement.
- Provide children with more challenging questions during discussion times in order to develop their thinking and learning skills further.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children achieve well. They get off to a good start and greatly enjoy the activities provided for them in the lively, creative environment. Most children reach standards which are well above those expected for their age in all the areas of learning as a result of good teaching. They do exceptionally well in their physical and creative development. All staff place a high priority on the development of communication, language and social skills in all activities and, as a result, the development of children's personal and social skills is excellent. Equally, those learning to understand and speak English as a new language make good progress because they get good support from the staff. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress towards the targets set for them and are well provided for, both in the quality of care from dedicated and experienced staff and from the support received from outside agencies.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Progress in this area of learning is a clear priority for the school and is an integral part of the children's daily experiences. Children greatly enjoy coming to Nursery, and this is reflected in their good levels of attendance. When asked, they say they like their activities and playing with their friends. Relationships between the staff and the children are excellent. Parents are particularly appreciative of their children's growing confidence. Typical comments from parents include, 'My child loves the Nursery and is reluctant to come home at the end of the day.' All children are gaining a very good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and behaviour is excellent. Children know that it is important to eat healthy snacks and have many opportunities for exercise. They are considerate of others, for example taking turns on the wheeled toys outside or sharing ideas whilst working on the computers. Making independent choices is central within the Nursery and, consequently, children's involvement in their learning is exceptionally well developed. They become confident in learning about the wider world, for example from their planned visits within the local area and from the visitors who come to school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils learn well because the quality of teaching is good. Enjoyable, practical activities are used effectively to develop children's skills and understanding. For much of their time children are free to choose from a wide range of activities that provide a wealth of learning opportunities both indoors and out. Staff ensure that these activities and the resources that support them are highly stimulating and varied. This provides children with a great deal of freedom to explore and learn through investigation, backed up by adult support and direction. Information is shared between staff and parents through the highly effective home school diaries. Parents comment on this saying, 'sending the weekly reports home keeps us up to date with what our children are learning'. The best teaching occurs when adults work with small groups and with individuals during this time, unobtrusively extending children's skills, knowledge and understanding.

However, at times, in group discussions, questions are not specifically targeted to challenge children enough and allow them to think things out for themselves.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a rich curriculum clearly focused on providing a good range of first-hand experiences that successfully meet the needs of each child. The indoor and outdoor activities are varied and stimulating, encouraging children to become independent in following their interests. The role-play areas reflect well the interests of the children, encouraging them to be confident, enthusiastic and happy while effectively developing their language and communication skills. The way the different areas are linked so that an activity simultaneously covers, for instance, communication and language, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, is a really good feature of the curriculum. Visitors to school and visits to places of interest in the locality and further afield extend children's day-to-day experiences and widen their understanding of the community well. Examples of this include visits to the local high school for dance sessions and learning Spanish from a visiting teacher. Work in information and communication technology is well established. Children confidently and skilfully use the interactive whiteboard, computers, digital cameras and scanners to record their work and to share ideas.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The staff take very good care of the children's welfare, safety and happiness. Parents have great confidence in them, clearly demonstrated by comments such as, 'My child is happy and well cared for, I could not ask for more.' Children feel safe in school and are confident that any adult will help if they have a problem. Thorough systems are in place to ensure that children are protected and safeguarded. Extensive links with therapists and outside agencies and outstanding partnership with parents and local schools underpin the care and support provided for the children. Staff provide appropriate guidance and support when needed, to help children understand how they can improve. This provision works very well and contributes useful information to the records of achievement available to the children's next school. Observations of the children undertaken by staff on a daily basis are very detailed and effective. However, the information gathered at these times is not always used well enough to monitor and track the progress children make. Breakfast and lunchtime clubs, together with mums and childminder/toddler groups, provide parents and children with a further opportunity to enrich their learning experiences before and during the school day.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of leadership and management is good. Together, the headteacher and staff have created a family learning environment where children are happy and flourish. The headteacher gives good leadership to fulfil the aims of meeting the needs of the children and their parents. There are effective systems to identify where further improvements can be made, for example in the planning for the Children's Centre. Views are gathered systematically from the children, staff and parents and are taken into account when planning developments. Parents are kept very well informed about their children's personal development and appreciate the work of the

staff. However, school leaders, including the governors, do not use the information gathered well enough to rigorously track and monitor the progress children make.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Rainhill Community Nursery School, Rainhill, L35 4NW.

I really enjoyed my visit to your school. I had a lovely time and your smiling faces showed me that you really enjoy coming to your Nursery.

I watched you make lots of lovely things like the honey biscuits and saw how you are learning how important it is to eat healthy food and to get plenty of exercise. I could see you doing lots of fun things when you played in your outside area. I noticed that, even when it was raining, you were still very happy to play outside. You did have a good time!

I came to see if you like your Nursery and how well everyone helps you learn and grow up. I agreed with you and your mums, dads and helpers and found your Nursery to be a good one.

All the grown-ups work hard for you. They make things fun. You are looked after really well too. I could see that you are learning to tidy up after yourself and you have all learned to have your drink and fruit sensibly. Well done!

I have asked for two things to be done to make your Nursery even better.

- To work out how much you are learning during your time in the Nursery.
- To make sure teachers ask you really interesting questions that make you have to think very hard.

I hope you carry on enjoying your time in your Nursery.