

# Columbia Market Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	100884
<b>Local authority</b>	Tower Hamlets
<b>Inspection number</b>	376477
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Madeleine Gerard

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	93
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rebecca Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicky Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10–11 December 2008
<b>School address</b>	Colombia Road London E2 7PG
<b>Telephone number</b>	0207 739 4518
<b>Fax number</b>	0207 729 8635
<b>Email address</b>	admin@columbiamarket.towerhamlets.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	3–5
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	7–8 February 2012
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Madeleine Gerard

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector spent approximately five hours observing teaching and learning led by four teachers and 12 additional staff and held meetings with staff and members of the governing body. The inspector took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at work in children's individual record books, and tracking data showing children's attainment and progress. The school's development plans and records for safeguarding children were also seen. The inspector considered responses to 72 questionnaires received from parents and carers.

## Information about the school

Columbia Market Nursery is a larger than other nursery schools. Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught in three Nursery classes. The majority of children attend both the morning and afternoon sessions. A small minority attend either only the morning or the afternoon sessions. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly above average. The proportion of children from minority ethnic groups is above average. Thirty-three per cent of children speak English as an additional language. A few of these children are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs is above average. Most of these children have speech, language and communication needs. The school organises and manages breakfast and after-school clubs. The quality of the school's garden has been recognised in the local authority gardening 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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school where children are happy. All children are valued, known as individuals and enjoy themselves in the school’s safe and caring environment. The school works successfully to promote children’s independence, self-confidence and very positive attitudes to learning.
- Achievement is good for all groups of children. They achieve particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development and in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. Speaking and listening skills are rightly prioritised and children enjoy daily storytelling and shared reading. Children’s writing is not always as good as it should be.
- Good teaching and careful planning ensure that tasks are well matched to children’s learning needs. Observations of children’s interests are used effectively to plan activities in the inside and outside areas that promote their understanding and increase their knowledge.
- Extremely well-organised arrangements help children to settle quickly when they join the school. Children behave outstandingly well because adults make their expectations consistently clear and provide excellent role models. Routines ensure that children feel very safe and are confident to select tasks and join in activities with adults and other children in the indoor and outdoor spaces. They know how to use equipment safely and use a variety of strategies for dealing with any problems that may arise.
- Leaders, managers and members of the governing body work together with the staff as an effective team. They have maintained the school’s good overall effectiveness since the previous inspection. Improvements include the development of the mathematics curriculum and additional provision for children speaking English as an additional language to raise their achievement. Regular monitoring ensures the quality of provision is consistently good, although strategies to raise children’s attainment in writing are not quite as

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rigorously checked.

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

- Ensure the curriculum for literacy enables children to build systematically on their writing skills and monitor the impact of this work on children's achievement by September 2012.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

The achievement of all groups of children is good. Far more parents and carers responded to the questionnaire than is found nationally and the large majority are rightly confident that their children make good progress and that their particular needs are met. Children join the school with skills and capabilities that are generally below those the levels expected of three-year-old children. By the time they leave the Nursery, their attainment overall is at expected levels for their age, and improving. Children make particularly rapid progress in their personal development and in their mathematical and communication skills, although less so in writing.

Learning is typically enthusiastic and focused. Children are keen to get involved in tasks as soon as they can and quickly choose activities for themselves in the inside and outdoor areas. They sustain their interest in what they are doing, work hard and concentrate well. They listen carefully to adults and follow instructions closely. This was illustrated in a problem-solving activity where boys and girls, working in a group with an adult, were developing their mathematical thinking skills. They enjoyed the challenge of trying to build towers copying photographs of famous landmark buildings from around the world. Children listened attentively to understand and follow the teacher's guidance on how to use long rulers to measure the height of their towers. They thought hard about how to record what they had built and the number of building blocks they had used. Children at the early stages of learning English as an additional language made similarly brisk progress to that of others in the group. They developed confidence in using key words because they listened carefully to the teacher and other children, and repeated them accurately.

Disabled children and those who have special educational needs make good progress in the development of their skills. They establish positive relationships with the adults and children. They enjoy working individually with teachers and additional adults and are eager to work in small groups with other children. They benefit from regular sessions tailored to their needs with specialist therapists and well-trained staff. Children who speak English as an additional language make good progress because they practise their listening and speaking skills very regularly. During a small group story session, children at an early stage of learning English enjoyed listening to a

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story they already knew. They were eager to take turns to lift the flaps in the book and were confident to participate by repeating out loud the parts of the story they could remember.

## Quality of teaching

In the survey, the very large majority of parents and carers agreed that their children are well taught at the school. Inspection findings endorse this view. In a comment typical of many, one parent wrote, 'My child looks forward to going to school every day and comes home with wonderful stories and new words.' The well-organised curriculum supports children to enjoy their learning and promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development particularly well. Adults strongly prioritise social skills. Children from a wide variety of different backgrounds work and play well together. Effective teamwork ensures that children can choose a wide variety of resources, toys and equipment in the inside and outside spaces. They take turns and share resources readily. They know to respect the sand-timers so that all children have an equal turn to use the computers. There is a good balance of adult-led tasks and opportunities for children to select activities for themselves. Occasionally the pace of learning slows during adult-led sessions when only one child at a time has the opportunity to contribute their ideas or answer questions. Children enjoy growing plants and exploring the life cycle of frogs by watching tadpoles develop. Recently introduced experiences help children to learn about the natural environment and enjoy outdoor activities in local woodland. During the inspection, children in the outdoor area, working with an adult, were learning to manage a campfire. They chose kindling twigs to use to start the fire and followed strict guidance about keeping safe from harm.

Staff use observations of children's progress to plan appropriately challenging tasks that are motivating and capture children's interest. For example, children inspired by a fairy story about a long-haired princess in a tower, made long blond wigs for themselves in order to dress up as the princess. They used tools and materials sensibly. Independence is encouraged through daily routines. Children know to find their name card and to put it on the attendance board in the classroom when they arrive. They systematically put on their coats when going outside and hang them up on their individual pegs when they come back in. All children help to tidy up and set the tables for lunch. Adults consistently ask questions and prompt discussion about what children are doing so that all groups of children extend their knowledge of new language swiftly. Children's self-esteem is boosted through taking photographs of their work for display around the school or to include in their personal 'diary' record books. Self-confidence, as well as awareness of others, grows through participation in cultural events and performances. These include percussion workshops with professional musicians and a dragon dance to celebrate Chinese New Year. Outings to the local area help children to develop their knowledge of the community. The breakfast and after-school clubs provide a calm and enjoyable start and finish to the day for the children who attend.

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## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Children make an exceptional contribution to their own learning. They very much enjoy working independently and participate enthusiastically in all activities. They behave outstandingly well and have exceptionally positive attitudes to school. Reflecting the comments of many, one parent wrote, 'My child adores going to Nursery.' Children show very caring attitudes to one another and are friendly. They play a strong role in ensuring all children feel included and respected. All the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were confident that behaviour is good at the school. There were no parents and carers who felt that learning is disrupted by bad behaviour, or who disagreed that bullying is dealt with effectively. All parents and carers in the survey confirmed that their children feel safe at school. Home visits by staff before children join the school, and structured induction arrangements to support children and their families when they start, ensure children feel very safe and make friends quickly.

Adults consistently explain to children how to keep themselves safe from harm. They help them to learn how to assert themselves calmly or seek help should any problems occur. Children know not to wear gloves when using the climbing frame and to walk sensibly in the inside spaces. Many children travel on foot or bicycle or scooter to school, and know how to do so safely. To support these skills, children have opportunities to borrow bicycles to use outside school. Children arrive punctually. The school successfully emphasises the importance of attending regularly and on time to enable children to benefit from daily routines and valuable learning time.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher is a strong leader with a clear vision for the school. Leaders, managers and members of the governing body work successfully, together with the staff, to tackle discrimination and promote equality well. They ensure that spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is consistently prioritised. Professional development for teachers and other teaching staff helps maintain a consistently good approach to teaching and children's learning. As a result, all groups of children, whatever their background or ability, have equal access to exciting and motivating curriculum provision and do well.

Since the previous inspection, the school has secured improvements to the assessment systems to ensure children's individual needs are identified quickly. Development of the curriculum includes a particular focus on mathematical thinking to raise children's attainment in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy, and the prioritising of regular reading. Similar improvements to the curriculum for writing are not yet as effectively established and monitored. The outdoor environment has been extensively developed and the new sensory room is used regularly to support children in individual sessions and small groups. Family learning days encourage parents and carers to take an active part in their children's learning through shared gardening in the award-winning gardens, and computing activities. Arrangements for safeguarding children meet statutory requirements; staff are well trained and the

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school site is secure and well maintained. All these strengths reflect the school's good capacity to improve further.



## 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](http://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 pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' 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 pupils 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 pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' 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.**



9 February 2012

Dear Children

### **Inspection of Columbia Market Nursery School, London E2 7PG**

Thank you for your friendly welcome when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed my visit and seeing all the interesting things that you do. I particularly enjoyed hearing about the Chinese dragon dance you recently performed in the school garden and seeing the origami carp fish you have made. This letter tells you what I found during my visit.

Columbia Market Nursery is good. I was pleased to see how very well you all get on together and to see how extremely well behaved you all are in the classrooms, the corridors and in the outdoor spaces. You understand exceptionally well how to keep yourselves safe from harm. This helps to make your school such a happy place to be. You enjoy all the interesting activities that the adults plan for you. Because of this you are all doing well in your learning. Those of you who need additional help are well supported so that you also make good progress. Your parents and carers told me they like the school very much, too.

We have asked the staff to make sure that you have plenty of opportunities to develop your writing skills. We would also like the school to check any changes that they make to ensure they are helping you to reach even higher standards in writing. You can help by practising writing regularly.

Finally, I would like to thank you again and wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Madeleine Gerard  
Lead inspector

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