

Triangle Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	100550
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	376410
Inspection dates	1–2 March 2012
Lead inspector	Kathryn Taylor

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	78
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Gibb
Headteacher	Sue Donovan
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2009
School address	25 William Bonney Estate Clapham Crescent London SW4 7JQ
Telephone number	020 7622 1393
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Age group	3–4
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Introduction

Inspection team

Kathryn Taylor

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector spent five hours observing 12 lessons and activities taught by five teachers and eight other staff. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at children's progress data and profiles, written policies and procedures, including safety information. The inspector spoke with children and with parents and carers bringing their children to school, met with four members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and held meetings with senior leaders and staff. She looked at the questionnaire responses from 53 parents and carers, as well as those completed by staff.

Information about the school

Triangle Nursery is a smaller than average-sized school that educates children from a wide range of ethnic and social backgrounds. The largest groups of children are Black African, Black Caribbean and Eastern European. An above average proportion of children are at an early stage of learning to speak English when they start school. The proportion of disabled children and those with special educational needs is broadly average. The majority of these children have a high level of need, mainly linked to autism and speech and language difficulties.

Thirty-seven children attend nursery on a part-time basis. Forty-one children attend full time. Some children have a full-time place because they have a high level of need. This includes potentially very vulnerable children. Parents and carers of other children attending full time pay a top-up fee. As a result of recent changes to the admissions policy, whereby all children now transfer to primary schools in September, most children now attend nursery for only three terms. This also means that a greater proportion of younger children are now in the nursery than was previously the case.

Following a period of instability the school entered an informal federation with another local nursery a year ago. The two schools share the same headteacher. Triangle Nursery was designated as a National Early Years Teaching Centre in July 2011.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. It provides an exceptionally warm welcome to children and has established a strong partnership with families. Achievement for all groups of children is outstanding. Children make particularly rapid progress in their personal development and their early reading, writing and communication skills.
- Teaching is outstanding. Staff have very high expectations and plan exciting, challenging activities that reflect children’s interests extremely well. Support for children new to learning English and for disabled children and those with special educational needs is excellent and allows them to make the same rapid progress as their peers.
- Children really love coming to nursery. They are very safe and well looked after. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well. Behaviour is excellent and children learn to consider and respect others. They form close, trusting relationships with adults and firm friendships with other children. They challenge themselves to try new things, knowing that adults will always be there to help. Excellent cultural awareness is promoted through learning about one another’s backgrounds and celebrations that involve parents, carers and the local communities.
- Highly effective leadership and governance mean the nursery has improved very well since the previous inspection, especially in more recent times. The headteacher has ensured that performance management processes are robust and that there is a strong and continued focus on developing teaching. The school has also extended its partnerships with other schools to very good effect. Senior leaders and members of the governing body acknowledge the need to build on the sterling work to develop their new leaders. They recognise also the challenges they face in maintaining the school’s current provision, staffing levels and expertise in the light of changes in the age at which children leave the nursery and have begun to generate income and to actively market the school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to secure the school's sustainability, maintain the focus on developing new leadership and partnerships.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter nursery with a wide range of skills and understanding that is well below national expectations overall. Irrespective of their starting point, children make outstanding progress in all areas of learning. The majority reach at least age-related expectations by the time they leave and the more able children's attainment exceeds expectations. The gap between boys' and girls' attainment has closed because staff design exciting activities to specifically engage boys in traditionally less popular activities. The gap between all children and those at an early stage of learning English is also narrowed because of the school's excellent focus on developing all children's speaking skills.

Disabled children and those with special educational needs make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points. This is because they receive excellent ongoing support and additional one-to-one teaching to address their specific needs. Staff provide just the right balance of support, consistently encouraging independence and facilitating inclusion; at times stepping back but staying very close, to ensure help is available promptly when needed.

In the survey, almost every parent and carer said their children are making good progress. In discussion a number highlighted their children's exceptional progress in speaking and in developing English, their behaviour, and their ability to make friends and to be independent. The inspection confirms that in the initial stages children make rapid progress in these areas. This is due to the particularly strong focus on settling children, establishing clear routines, good patterns of behaviour and immersing children in language, songs and books. By the end of their first term in nursery children have developed the language skills and independence to begin to make rapid progress in all of the other areas of learning.

Most children speak very confidently and at length. They enjoy experimenting with new words and phrases, repeating those introduced by staff. Boys and girls show a love of stories and books, often retelling and reenacting stories through play as well as looking at books or asking adults to read to them. During story time children listen intently, joining in when familiar stories are read, anticipating what will happen next and describing the characters and their feelings. Children quickly learn how to find the title and author, to read from left to right and to use phonics (linking sounds and letters). They learn to use these skills to recognise the wide range of printed labels

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with pictures that, for example, describe activities or locate resources. Almost all children recognise their names to self-register. Children enjoy a wide range of mark-making activities and some are becoming adept at forming recognisable letters to notate their names and work. Higher attaining children are already beginning to read books for themselves.

Day-to-day learning is typically brisk. During the inspection, children progressed very well when working independently of adults, for example when painting, playing in the garden or café, making shape patterns or mixing and shaping materials as part of 'cooking' activities. During adult-led activities children made similarly rapid progress.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is outstanding over time. Parents and carers rightly believe their children are taught well. Staff plan an excellent range of activities and provide a very calm, welcoming environment. Thus the curriculum meets all children's needs exceptionally well and teaching promotes children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. Therefore, children leave their parents and carers happily, quickly find a friend and get busy.

Staff have an excellent understanding of how young children learn and plan very varied, well-resourced activities that sustain children's interest throughout the day. Adults actively play alongside groups of children to model activities, engage children and move their learning forward extremely well. This was the case, for example, when adults were working with children manoeuvring vehicles, making music, building a boat then sailing away and when sharing children's observations about the behaviour and habitats of snails. Similarly when children choose to work independently or with friends, adults keep a good overview, stopping to provide encouragement or to pose a question that extended the learning even further. During all activities adults frequently pose open-ended questions that challenge children and get them thinking more deeply.

Adults use every opportunity to extend children's speaking, including at lunchtimes, which provide an excellent opportunity to develop children's independence and social skills. Children help lay the tables, pour their own water and pass food to their friends. They discuss the menu, their preferences and are encouraged to try different foods.

Direct teaching during adult-led sessions is especially focused, skilled and imaginative. In a mathematics lesson, for example, children were developing a particularly good understanding of time, 'one more' and different ways of recording their findings. The teacher designed a game whereby children took turns to ride a bike as fast as they could to collect one alien at a time from the bottom of the garden. Children were totally engrossed in their task, enthusiastically using this first-hand experience to count how many aliens they had rescued in three minutes. The teacher then introduced written methods, which the children later began to use for

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themselves.

Teaching of groups as part of intervention programmes is similarly very skilled. During a speech and language session for children with special educational needs, the teacher consistently modelled clear speech and used a very wide range of techniques, including games, songs and pictures, to ensure that every child learned well, gained confidence and increased accuracy.

Assessments are very good, ongoing and regularly summarised in children's profiles. Children's progress is tracked carefully, discussed with families and targets are then shared. Staff meetings at the end of each day are used well to review children's learning and engagement, as well as to plan any changes and amendments to activities for the next day to maximise learning opportunities.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Without exception parents and carers responding to the survey noted that behaviour is good, children are well looked after and any type of bullying is dealt with effectively. The inspection found that children typically have excellent attitudes to school, behave exceptionally well and are kept very safe.

Children are eager to learn, show curiosity, develop independence and sustain concentration. Boys and girls from different backgrounds work very well together and are kind to one other. Children learn to take turns. They respond well to adults' consistent reinforcement of how to keep themselves and others safe and healthy, for example by making sure they wash their hands, move sensibly around the nursery and use the climbing apparatus and tools safely. Staff deal with instances of unwanted or unkind behaviour promptly, teaching children how to empathise with others and to resolve conflicts amicably.

Strong links with families, supported through home visits, mean that children develop very trusting relationships with staff. In addition, parents and carers respond positively to the school's drive to ensure that children attend regularly and arrive punctually.

Leadership and management

Leadership is outstanding. It is underpinned by the headteacher's exceptional skills, very clear vision, high aspirations and her strong focus on teamwork and professional development. Staff, therefore, feel valued and empowered. This has helped to secure rapid improvements since the previous inspection, as well as demonstrating an outstanding capacity to continue to improve and to share staff's expertise more widely. Leaders at different levels, some fairly new to post, make an increasingly strong contribution to working very well with families, evaluating the school's work and making improvements.

The governing body brings significant expertise to the school and is highly involved

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in shaping the school's direction. Governors have acted swiftly to redress some difficulties that the school experienced during a period of instability and were instrumental in forming the federation with a local outstanding school. Alongside the staff, governors work with unflinching determination to promote equality, ensure that the school is fully inclusive and that all groups of children, whatever their background or ability, achieve as well as they can. Another key factor in securing these outstanding outcomes is the high priority all leaders place on the promotion of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Leaders provide an excellent curriculum that is very carefully tailored to children's age, interests and abilities. Outdoor provision has improved well since the last inspection. The school invests heavily in staff and training to ensure it can best meet the needs of its children, including disabled children and those with special educational needs. The curriculum has recently been adapted to meet the changing intake and to respond to the task of settling a lot of children in during September. The curriculum therefore has developed to prioritise children's personal development and communication skills specifically during the first term.

Partnership work is excellent. Staff work extremely closely with a wide range of services and professionals to ensure that children's needs can be met, both within and beyond school. Staff work exceptionally well with parents and carers. Several told the inspector that they turn to the school when needing help for their families, for example to access relevant support agencies or improve their own parenting skills. The school has very strong links with other schools, including its partner school. These enable staff to share resources, to learn from others and disseminate best practice.

Arrangements for safeguarding children meet statutory requirements; staff have received recent training and the school site is very secure, extremely clean and well maintained.

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 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.



5 March 2012

Dear Children

Inspection of Triangle Nursery School, London SW4 7JQ

Thank you for making me really welcome when I visited your nursery. I really enjoyed being with you. This letter tells you what I found during my visit.

Triangle Nursery is an outstanding school. I know how much you enjoy coming to nursery because I saw you smiling as you hurried in. I noticed that you quickly found your friends and started playing.

Teaching and your learning are excellent. I saw how good you are at speaking and how well you are learning to read and write. Grown ups work very well together to help you. They expect you to work very hard and you do! They plan interesting activities for you to do each day, play with you and teach you lots of new things and new words.

You behave extremely well. You help the grown ups by tidying up and helping to prepare things. You move around the nursery very sensibly. You are really good at making choices about what you are going to do. You concentrate really hard. You are very kind to each other particularly your friends and the children who find it a bit harder to learn new things.

Your headteacher and staff work very hard to check how well you are learning. They are always thinking of new ways to make sure that your nursery gets better all of the time.

I have asked the grown ups to keep improving your school so that other children coming to nursery can enjoy all of the activities after you have left.

I hope you all continue to work hard and to have a lovely time in nursery.

Yours sincerely

Kathryn Taylor
Lead inspector

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