

Clyde Early Childhood Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100667
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	354861
Inspection dates	9–10 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Kathryn Taylor

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joan Norris
Headteacher	Cathryn Kinsey
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors made 12 observations of children working on independent and adult-led activities taught by four teachers, as well as nursery nurses and other support staff. They held meetings with members of the governing body and staff as well as talking to the children as they worked. Inspectors spoke to parents and carers who were bringing their children to school. They looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan, attendance and children's progress data, children's portfolios, local authority reports on the school and safeguarding information. They analysed questionnaires received from 57 parents and carers as well as those completed by staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The way school uses assessment data to track the progress of different groups of children and inform improvement planning.
- The extent to which the provision enables different groups of children to make good progress and helps to improve their early reading, writing and mathematics skills.
- The contribution that leaders at different levels make to evaluating the school's work.

Information about the school

The school provides 66 full-time and 42 part-time places. It also provides additional day care within the nursery setting as well as daily breakfast care and after-school care. The nursery runs the Lewisham Playbus, which provides nursery education to hard to reach communities. The school is designated as a children's centre. The children's centre was not inspected as part of this inspection.

Nursery children come from a wide range of backgrounds. An above-average proportion of children are from homes where English is an additional language. One in every five children has special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most children enter the nursery after their third birthday. They transfer to primary school either in January or September following their fourth birthday.

There have been significant changes in the school's leadership in the past six months, including a new headteacher and several new members of the governing body.

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: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Clyde Nursery provides a good standard of education and a warm welcome to families. Parents and carers rightly believe that their children make good progress. They particularly appreciate that their children are well cared for in this inclusive nursery. The following comments from parents and carers are fairly typical: 'I have been really impressed with the care and support from the team and from my child's key workers' and 'My child is treated as an individual, is encouraged and valued.'

Children feel safe and settle quickly because staff get to know them before they join nursery, through home visits and children's involvement in the children's centre services, such as 'stay and play'. Children enjoy their time in nursery, grow in confidence and develop independence. This, along with children's good social skills and attitudes to learning and average attendance, means they are well prepared for primary school by the time they leave.

Good provision, combined with a strong focus on children's individual needs, means that children of all abilities, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well. Staff have a well-developed understanding of young children's needs, keep a good overview of their progress and provide a wide range of interesting indoor and outdoor activities throughout the year. Occasionally staff do not intervene quickly enough when some children find it hard to sustain interest in activities. Although the monitoring of day-to-day teaching and learning is largely informal and evidence gathered is not always well documented, the school monitors the progress of individual children well through observations and the use of children's portfolios.

The headteacher and governing body have begun the process of bringing greater rigour to monitoring provision so as to evaluate the impact of the school's work and policies more fully. Leaders also recognise that assessment data on all children's attainments and progress are not used to maximum effect to help determine how well different groups are performing and to guide the school towards further improvements.

As was the case at the time of the last inspection, the school is well led and managed. With a very clear steer from the new headteacher the new leadership team are working well together. They share the headteacher's commitment to improvement and to meeting the diverse needs of families. Combined with a clear set of action plans, increased rigour in the way that the school has begun to evaluate its work and the training provided for those leaders who are new to post, this means that the nursery has a good capacity to continue to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the school's self-evaluation by:

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- using the school's data to more effectively to evaluate how well the school is meeting the needs of different groups
- regularly monitoring and evaluating day-to-day teaching, learning and provision to identify where further improvements might be made and address any inconsistencies, including the way that staff intervene when some children are not engaged in activities
- strengthening the leadership skills of new leaders and the contribution that they and governors make to evaluating the school's work and determining the impact of the school's policies.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children**2**

Children enter the nursery with skills that overall are lower than those usually found for children of this age, largely because a higher-than-expected proportion of children have additional needs in developing communication skills, learning English or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Irrespective of their starting point, children of all abilities make good progress so that attainment is broadly as expected by the time they join the primary school. Children's progress in their speaking and communication skills and in their personal and social development is particularly good because of the strong emphasis that staff place on these areas.

Children most often sustain concentration and learn well because they find activities engaging. This was evident when children enjoyed completing puzzles, mark making, bathing dolls, hunting for treasure in the sunken pirate ship, creating pirate stories, building towers and filling small containers with sand. Staff often make timely interventions to move children's learning on and provide support for those who need it, including some who are very new to the nursery. When working with adults in a larger group, children enjoy collaborative activities such as the dragon dance, music making or singing songs together. They learned well and were challenged in a session when the teacher used song, rhymes and practical activities to explore numbers to 10 and beyond and introduced new vocabulary and simple calculations.

Outdoor activities are adventurous and energetic, as seen, for example, when children were swinging and climbing, manoeuvring wheeled toys or collecting balls to roll down a ramp. Involvement in these activities undoubtedly contributes to children's very healthy appetites evident at lunchtimes, teatimes and snack times.

Children develop trusting relationships with staff, as is evident when they happily leave their parents and carers. They behave well and learn to consider the consequences of their actions and to resolve arguments. Good examples were seen of staff encouraging children to tell other children when they had made them unhappy. Staff also stressed the importance of saying 'sorry' before making a fresh start.

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These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment ¹	3
The quality of children's learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
Children's behaviour	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Children's attendance ¹	3
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The nursery is well staffed and resourced and provides secure indoor and outdoor accommodation. Children enjoy a broad curriculum and regular outdoor activities throughout the year, including adventurous play, growing plants in the garden and playing in the snow. Their learning is extended well through cultural events, such as learning about Chinese New Year, firework parties and birthday celebrations. Visitors to the school and regular trips, including those to local amenities and further afield, for example to a farm and the seaside, add to children's enjoyment and their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Provision caters well for a wide range of abilities, including children who have special educational needs/and or disabilities. Children's individual needs are identified early on so that staff can plan appropriate support quickly. More-able children are usually challenged, including through additional small-group work and teaching.

Although there are a few inconsistencies, teaching and learning are good overall. Staff understand how young children learn best and plan a wide range of activities that reflect and build on children's interests. Occasionally, individual children who find it hard to sustain interest in activities are left to their own devices for too long without any meaningful adult intervention. Similarly at 'tidy-up time' too many of the staff were

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preoccupied with clearing away equipment. This meant that some children were left without enough to do or enough adult support and direction.

Day-to-day assessment of children's learning through observations, questioning and staff's involvement in activities is good. Children also select pieces of their own work that they are proud of. They ask staff to photograph this work and put it in their profiles, which they later share with parents and carers. Staff use such opportunities well to engage children in discussion about their learning.

Staff make good use of partnership work to help them make improvements and address weaknesses in some children's attainments. Good examples include the recent work with other schools and a speech therapist to improve some children's speaking skills and a successful project, which has proved effective in improving boys' attainment and engagement in activities.

The nursery provides good care, guidance and support for children. Parents and carers are very appreciative of the personal support that staff provide for their children and themselves during difficult periods. Strong links with external agencies as well as the services provided by the children centre assist the school in providing additional support for more vulnerable children and their families.

High quality additional before-school and after-school care also make a significant contribution to children's welfare and development. Children are cared for by known adults who provide engaging activities and are responsive to children's day-to-day interests and energy levels at different times in the day.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Staff share the headteacher's commitment to strive towards excellence. Through training opportunities and regular discussions to review individual children's progress, staff are well supported to develop their practice. The headteacher recognises that the formal monitoring of provision is not regular enough. She has rightly prioritised improving this feature as part of the plans to strengthen overall self-evaluation processes. She is ensuring that other leaders, including some very new to post, receive appropriate support and training to develop and extend their leadership skills.

Though currently satisfactory, under the good leadership of the chair, governance is improving quickly. The governing body recognise that they too need to have a greater

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involvement in helping the school to evaluate its work and policies. They are, for example, increasing their visits to the school to see how well it is doing. Safeguarding procedures, risk assessments and staff training, including that for child protection, are securely in place.

Staff and leaders have a good understanding of their community and children's and their families' needs. They make parents and carers very welcome, finding time to chat with them when they bring their children to school. They also help them to contribute to their children's learning, for example, through discussions and workshops. They signpost them to access support from other services.

The nursery is inclusive. Staff work effectively to promote equality, remove barriers and close gaps in attainment. In this way, and through community and family activities and provision of the playbus which travels to various hard-to-reach communities, the school also makes a very strong contribution to community cohesion at the local and wider community levels. Links with schools further afield are as yet less well developed.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers have very positive views of the nursery. They feel the school is well led and managed and that children make good progress. They appreciate the wide range of activities on offer, the fact that their children enjoy coming to school and that staff are approachable and children are very well cared for. The inspection confirms parents' and carers' positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Clyde Early Childhood Centre to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 57 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 108 children (the equivalent of 87 full time) registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	82	10	18	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	70	17	30	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	40	70	15	26	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	74	12	21	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	70	10	18	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	63	17	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	56	21	37	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	32	56	19	33	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	44	28	49	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	54	19	33	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	65	13	23	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	37	65	13	23	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	77	13	23	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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 children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
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 children. 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well children acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

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.



14 February 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Clyde Early Childhood Centre, Deptford, London SE8 5NH

I am writing you a letter to tell you what we found out when we visited your nursery. Thank you for talking to us, being kind to us and letting us look at your work. Your mums, dads and carers think the nursery is good and we agree.

This is what we found:

- You behave well and work hard.
- You are happy in the nursery and make lots of new friends.
- You learn to do lots of new things you could not do before.
- The staff make sure there are lots of different activities for you to do indoors and outside.
- The adults know and understand you well. They take notice of what you like to do and make sure they give you time to do it. They also encourage you to try new things.
- Everyone in the nursery makes sure that you are safe and well looked after.
- Your headteacher and staff lead the school well.

We think the nursery does most things well but to help you to do even better, we are asking the school to:

- check more often on how well you are learning so that staff can decide how they might make the nursery become even better
- help the staff and governors who have new jobs to do by teaching them new skills.

You can help by continuing to work hard and to play well together.

Yours sincerely

Kathy Taylor
Lead inspector

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