

Rebecca Cheetham Nursery Education Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102702
Local Authority	Newham
Inspection number	355239
Inspection dates	8–9 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Mary Summers

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	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	110
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ruba Sivagnanam
Headteacher	Jean Bolam (acting)
Date of previous school inspection	27 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited seven sessions which were led by a total of ten teachers and practitioners. They observed the Nursery's work, and looked at documents associated with safeguarding procedures and self-evaluation. They examined data and information about pupils and looked at samples of their work. They also scrutinised improvement plans as well as planning for lessons and the curriculum. Minutes from meetings held by the governing body and monitoring and evaluation reports written by senior leaders, as well as the local authority, were also examined. Inspectors took account of the views of 17 members of staff who had completed questionnaires as well as the content of 36 questionnaires that had been completed and returned by parents and carers.

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

- How well does the Nursery provide for the growing numbers of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- What is the impact of the Nursery's work on raising attendance levels?
- How well are children developing their skills in information and communication technology?
- How effectively is the senior leadership team monitoring and evaluating the Nursery's work and planning for improvement?

Information about the school

Rebecca Cheetham Nursery Education Centre draws its children from a diverse range of cultural and social backgrounds. Most come from minority ethnic groups. The largest groups are from Asian and White European heritages. Thirty-two different languages are spoken. About half of children come from homes where English is not the first language and one third are in the early stages of learning English. Just under a fifth of children have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Their main needs are speech, language and communication. Seventy children attend in the mornings and seventy in the afternoons. The Nursery has gained an Early Years Healthy Eating award from the local authority.

The Nursery offers a range of services to parents and carers and the wider community, with other agencies to fulfil its role as a children's centre. These include family support, community support and health services. This inspection covered only the education and well-being of children aged three and four. The children's Centre is inspected separately.

The acting headteacher has been in place since September 2009. A new deputy headteacher, who has been acting for the last two terms, takes up the substantive appointment in April 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: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This Nursery has been through a challenging period over the last eighteen months without a permanent senior leadership team. Nonetheless, with the satisfactory leadership provided by the temporary headteacher and governing body, appropriate support from the local authority and, more recently, targeted support from two headteachers from a local school, the Nursery is providing a satisfactory education for children. The new substantive deputy headteacher has brought much needed stability to the leadership team.

Children start in the Nursery with a wide range of skills and abilities, but these are often below those expected for their age. Skills in communication, language and literacy and problem solving, calculation and number are often well below those typically expected. They make satisfactory progress and their achievement is satisfactory by the time they transfer to other schools. They reach expected levels for their age in personal, social and emotional development, physical and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, although their attainment in linking sounds and letters, writing, calculation and problem solving remains below those levels. This is because there are not enough planned opportunities for children to develop these skills. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning to speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. However, although making satisfactory progress overall, these children and those who are more able do not always reach the levels they should because some activities set for them are not matched well enough to their abilities.

Satisfactory teaching that takes into account children's interests enables children to grow in confidence and become independent learners. The outdoor area in particular is well organised and provides some useful opportunities for children's development, especially in personal and physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world.

Children feel safe, lead healthy lifestyles and make a good contribution towards enabling the Nursery to run smoothly. The Nursery welcomes and encourages parents, carers and partners in the wider community to become involved in demonstrating different aspects of their different cultures during the day and at special events, such as Chinese New Year. The Nursery's engagement with parents, carers and external bodies is good and supports children's personal and social development well.

Senior leaders have a satisfactory vision for the future and are sharing this effectively with staff. Monitoring and evaluation processes have been strengthened recently and are providing leaders with satisfactory information about performance. However, they are still not organised well enough to provide a detailed and accurate picture so that specific weaknesses can be identified. Senior leaders monitor provision, but not rigorously or regularly enough to help teachers and practitioners develop their practice quickly. Improvement plans, while focusing on some of the key priorities, lack clear targets,

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actions, milestones and lines of accountability to secure rapid improvement. Nonetheless, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, especially in the use of information and communication technology and in the way adults are responding to the increased expectations of their roles. This improvement, coupled with children's good personal development and satisfactory academic progress, shows that there is satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve children's progress and achievement in linking sounds and letters, writing, calculation and problem solving by planning more opportunities within adult-led and child-initiated activities.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that assessment information is used effectively to plan activities that match children's individual needs more closely.
- Improve leadership and management by July 2011 by:
 - establishing a clear cycle of monitoring and evaluation, involving senior leaders and the governing body, to identify strengths and weaknesses in the Nursery's performance
 - ensuring that improvement plans include measureable targets, actions, milestones by which to judge progress and clear lines of accountability
 - checking the quality of teaching regularly and providing feedback to adults about how they can improve their practice.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

3

Children, whatever their starting points, make satisfactory progress and their achievement and attendance is satisfactory. They play well in activities designed to stimulate their imagination as well as to promote their social and moral development effectively. Two older children helped one another to fill buckets in the sandpit, for example, taking turns in sharing the spade and talking about the 'chocolate cakes' they were making. Children enjoy using digital cameras to record their achievements and use computers appropriately to access programs from a list of options on the menu. Relationships between key persons and children are good and this means that children respond readily to their key persons and behave well.

Regardless of the weather, children enjoy all the different activities that are prepared for them outside. They designed and built pathways from milk crates, enjoyed whisking 'pancakes' from flour and water and experimented with materials in the waterfall to see which floated and sank. They enjoyed listening to a story and acting it out with puppets, running away from 'the crocodile' with great excitement. They develop their confidence with language and vocabulary appropriately because adults give them many opportunities to talk about what they are doing. Their knowledge of letter sounds and skills in writing, calculation and problem solving are weaker because there are few planned activities to support the development of these skills.

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The Nursery's work to gain the Early Years Healthy Eating award from the local authority means that children have a good awareness of how to keep themselves fit and healthy. They learned from adults' good examples during snack and lunch times, showing good table manners and chatting pleasantly together. They take great care to play safely on equipment and are confident to tell adults if they have a problem. Their good behaviour and contributions to tidying up indicate they make a good contribution to the smooth running of the Nursery. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children play effectively with their friends from different backgrounds and are developing a good understanding of right and wrong.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment ¹	3
The quality of children's learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	3
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?

A wide range of interesting activities are planned to promote children's creativity, their personal development and knowledge and understanding of the world. The new deputy headteacher has recently begun a programme to introduce letters and sounds to the children, but this is still at the very early stages to show any significant impact. A good range of visits and visitors to the Nursery helps children to learn, for example, about road safety, good dental hygiene and the wide range of different cultures within their own local community. An appropriate balance between activities led by adults or initiated by children

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is provided. Sessions led by adults encourage children to develop their language for thinking and their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Most adults are skilled at asking questions and provide good opportunities for children to express themselves at length. They have positive relationships with the children which help them to manage their behaviour well. Planning is satisfactory and includes all six areas of learning. However, some aspects receive insufficient attention, for example sounds, letters, writing, calculating and problem solving, and this hinders children's progress. Teachers' use of assessment to support learning is, in many respects, satisfactory. For example, teachers ask questions that are designed to find out what children know, understand and can do, then ask further questions to extend their understanding. Adults make regular assessments that build into a useful portfolio which tracks children's progress and achievements. However, this information is not always used effectively to ensure that activities are planned at the correct levels for children with different needs.

The level of care, guidance and support is satisfactory. Effective links with the children's centre open up many opportunities for parents to seek guidance about their children's health and well-being. Induction arrangements are successful in settling children into Nursery and there are good systems to help them transfer to their next schools. The before- and after-school care is good and enables children to enjoy a homely atmosphere in the 'Yellow Room' at the beginning and end of the day. Recent monitoring has identified the need to improve levels of cleanliness in the Nursery, as some of the toys and equipment are not as clean as they might be. The support and guidance provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language are satisfactory. Their needs are quickly assessed and contact made with parents, carers and any relevant external agencies to access support and advice. However, targets for improvement often lack clarity and this makes it difficult for key persons to plan carefully enough to help children meet their goals.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership team has been strengthened recently by the appointment of a permanent deputy headteacher who is providing good support to the staff and the acting headteacher. The Nursery places its partnership with parents and carers and the local community at the heart of its work and this means that parents and carers develop good levels of trust in the staff at the Nursery. Good partnerships have been forged with a wide

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range of local agencies, for example health services, to make sure that staff and families can access advice and support when needed.

An effective partnership between the temporary headteacher and two local headteachers has helped to clarify and share the vision for the Nursery's development. Policies and procedures have been strengthened to ensure the Nursery operates smoothly on a daily basis. Middle leaders are taking an increasingly active role in monitoring provision. However, there is no clear monitoring cycle to ensure that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in evaluating the Nursery's performance and supporting improvement. Although improvement plans are satisfactory, they lack benchmarks to check progress towards clear and measurable targets, rigorous timelines and lines of accountability to ensure rapid improvement.

There are satisfactory procedures to ensure that pupils are safe at the Nursery. Staff are properly trained in safeguarding and new staff are checked carefully to ensure their suitability. Staff promote equality of opportunity satisfactorily. The Nursery has begun to track the progress of different groups of pupils to identify underachievement. Racist incidents are rare, but procedures are in place to ensure that any which arise are tackled promptly.

The governing body is supportive and has a satisfactory understanding of the Nursery's performance. It has been instrumental in guiding and supporting senior staff during the past two years. Finances are monitored stringently to ensure that spending is within acceptable limits. At present, the governing body has a limited role in evaluating performance and in prioritising areas for improvement, but is currently seeking to improve this aspect of its work. The Nursery promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Staff are working to improve links with communities and cultures outside the local environment.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

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Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are very positive about the school's work. They agree that their children enjoy school and that children are kept safe. A few commented that the Nursery did not help them to support their children at home and that children were not prepared well for the future. Parents' and carers' views overall are similar to those held by inspectors. From discussion with the headteacher and observations of children learning, inspectors noted that the Nursery organised a good range of workshops and meetings to help parents and carers learn how to support their children at home. Inspectors, who looked at a range of activities in which children were involved, judged that children were satisfactorily prepared for transfer to their next schools, although some aspects of literacy and numeracy were not up to the level expected for their age.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Rebecca Cheetham Nursery Education Nursery 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 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 70 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	53	17	47	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	50	14	39	1	3	1	3
My school informs me about my child's progress	14	39	17	47	3	8	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	12	33	19	53	3	8	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	12	33	20	56	3	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	44	13	36	5	14	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	50	15	42	2	6	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)	14	39	16	44	4	11	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	39	18	50	2	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	36	18	50	2	6	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	33	16	44	3	8	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	13	36	18	50	0	0	2	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	47	14	39	3	8	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.



10 March 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Rebecca Cheetham Nursery Education Centre, London E15 3JT

Thank you so much for welcoming us recently to your Nursery. You were very keen to tell us all about it and what you enjoyed most. Your views, along with everything else that we saw, helped us to get to know your Nursery and how well it works. You go to a satisfactory Nursery and these are some of the important things we found out about it.

- You are happy and enjoy coming to Nursery.
- You understand what it means to be healthy, and you enjoy healthy snacks and lunches.
- You like your key persons and play well with each other.
- You like playing outside in all weathers.
- You enjoy learning about your environment. I liked the way you experimented with the eggs to see which were light and which were heavy. You had great fun cracking them all to see what was inside!
- The people in charge are working well with your parents and carers to make sure you are happy and healthy.

There are a few things that could be even better in your Nursery. We have asked the adults to help you learn more about letters and sounds, writing and using and solving problems about numbers. We have asked the adults to use the observations they make of your activities to help plan the next steps in your learning. Finally we have asked those in charge to keep a close check on all the activities you are doing and how the adults are helping you, to make sure that you are all learning as well as you can. We would like them to plan more carefully to make sure that things improve at a faster rate.

You can all help by continuing to listen carefully to your key persons.

Yours sincerely

Mary Summers
Lead inspector

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