

Nell Gwynn Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100770
Local Authority	Southwark
Inspection number	376451
Inspection dates	14–15 September 2011
Reporting inspector	David Shepherd

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	96
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barbara Stevens
Headteacher	Jeanne Peskett
Date of previous school inspection	20 March 2011
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Sixteen sessions led by five different teachers and eight early years practitioners were observed. Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff and the Chair of the Governing Body. Opportunities were taken to talk to children about their views of the school. A small number of parents and carers were spoken to face to face. Questionnaires from 35 parents and carers and 16 staff were received and analysed. A sample of documents was scrutinised, including progress data, planning, attendance and safeguarding.

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

- The progress being made by children, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are new to learning English.
- The extent to which children understand and adopt healthy lifestyles and safe practices, and make a positive contribution to the school.
- The consistency in the quality of teaching and the use of assessment between different staff.
- The impact of the monitoring and evaluation carried out by senior staff on improving children's outcomes.

Information about the school

Nell Gwynn is an average-sized nursery school and serves an area with diverse communities. A higher than average proportion of children come from minority ethnic communities and speak English as an additional language. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. An average proportion of children have special educational needs and/or disabilities. At the time of the inspection, 34 children attended on a full-time basis with a further 62 attending part-time. The nursery is linked to a children's centre which shares the same site and is managed by the governing body. The children's centre is not included in this inspection.

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

Children are very happy to come to Nell Gwynn Nursery School because they are well cared for and feel extremely safe learning and playing in a stimulating environment where they have fun. They develop excellent relationships with adults, are very responsive to them and behave well. Children from a wide variety of backgrounds get on very well together and learn to respect each other's differences. This is appreciated by all those parents and carers who completed the questionnaire. A typical view was expressed by one parent who wrote, 'This is an excellent school. My child is very happy here.'

Children who attend on a full-time basis enjoy appetising lunches in family-style groups where they learn about healthy eating and good manners. They help tidy up well for their age at the end of activities and at lunchtimes. Adults provide a wide range of activities both indoors and outdoors in the exceptionally well resourced garden and rear areas and these engage and motivate children who are eager to try out new experiences. This helps most children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those for whom English is an additional language, to make good progress in all aspects of their learning. However, a few of the more able children do not find some activities challenging enough and do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

Teaching and learning are good overall. Some teaching, especially of music and dance, is inspirational and fully engages highly motivated children in creating rhythms and moving to music. A notable feature of activities is that they are practical and based upon children's interests and experiences. Assessments of children's progress are made regularly by staff and these are recorded systematically in attractively presented portfolios. The school is developing its assessment systems further because it does not yet have sufficiently robust data about children's overall attainment and progress by the end of Nursery.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and is ably supported by senior leaders, staff and the governing body. They have a good awareness of the school's strengths and areas that need improvement and are working effectively to improve any issues identified. The headteacher, senior leaders and governing body share a strong commitment to embedding ambition and securing improvements. This, together with careful management of resources, including finance, indicates that the school has a good capacity to improve.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2012, provide more challenge to the most able children to ensure they all make the progress of which they are capable.
- Improve procedures for assessment so that the school has an accurate picture of children's attainment and progress by:
 - including the initial assessment of children's attainment on the computer program
 - carrying out more detailed and rigorous assessment of children before they transfer to Reception.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

2

Children listen attentively and thoroughly enjoy the activities that have been provided for them. For example, groups of children enjoyed cutting up vegetables such as peppers, parsnips, potatoes and aubergines to see what they looked like on the inside and how they tasted. Children's reactions to this activity varied from, 'I like the taste of peppers', to, 'Ugh, I don't like that!' when looking at a clove of garlic. Children enjoyed making scones and feeling the texture of the mixture as they kneaded it into a flat shape.

Children start in the Nursery with skills and abilities that are generally slightly below expected levels for their age. Most achieve well in all areas of learning, especially in their mathematical development where progress, especially in calculation, is quickest. By the time they leave the Nursery, most are reaching the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning. Children with special educational needs, especially those with speech, language and communication difficulties, do not reach typical age-related levels but they make good progress nonetheless. Children who speak English as an additional language quickly pick up skills in the English language and make good progress. Children eligible for free schools meals also make good progress. There is no difference in the attainment and progress of boys and girls. The attainment of the more able children is generally higher than typically expected in all areas of learning, in spite of a few not making as much progress as they could.

Children, even those who are new to the school, display confident attitudes that indicate how safe they feel. One parent wrote, 'The teachers have helped my son become so confident and grow in independence.' During the inspection, behaviour was good and occasionally exemplary whether children were inside or outside, playing with their friends or working alone. Children who attend full time are keen to tidy up after activities, but this has yet to be learnt by those who have just started school. Children are developing a good understanding of healthy lifestyles by growing vegetables, eating fresh fruit and drinking milk during the day, washing their hands after going to the toilet and exercising regularly. They are developing a good understanding of how to get on with others by discussing how to resolve some conflicts through the use of Wendy the puppet, who exhibits through role-play

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behaviours such as hitting or biting others. Attendance is average.

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	1
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

How effective is the provision?

A varied curriculum, which includes excellent opportunities to visit places of interest and to benefit from a wide range of visitors to school, promotes effectively children’s progress across the six areas of learning. Regular visits are made to museums, including the Natural History Museum and Science Museum, the National Gallery, local woods and city farms. In addition, visits are made to the seaside, The Tower of London, and boat trips are taken on the River Thames. Visitors to the school include musicians, Indian and Bolivian dancers, authors, artists and parents and carers talking about the jobs they do. This rich provision is reflected by one parent who wrote, ‘My son comes home so excited to tell me what he has done.’

A breakfast club and after-school club are provided but are not well supported by parents and carers. Children are provided with good opportunities for listening, reading and developing early writing skills, but are not given enough opportunities to reply to questions in words or extended sentences to help them promote their speaking and thinking skills. Planning includes provision for children at different levels of ability, but that for the more able is occasionally not challenging enough.

Skilled intervention by staff in the role-play areas helps children to develop their self-confidence, independence and social skills, and encourages their use of mathematical

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

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vocabulary as they learn about different shapes and count out cups, saucers and plates. Staff skilfully teach children how to control a mouse when they are using computer programs.

Staff compile portfolios on children’s achievements and these provide a useful record of progress. However, not all staff include the next steps in learning when recording formal observations on children and this can lead to missed opportunities to promote increased learning.

All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are looked after well. Their individual needs are identified soon after they start school and specialist provision allocated for them. Children leave the Nursery and join a wide range of primary schools. Good links with the main primary schools promote smooth transition to Reception classes. One parent expressed this by writing, ‘I feel both of my children have been well prepared for primary school.’

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?

The headteacher provides strong leadership for a well-motivated and enthusiastic staff whose morale is very high. Together, staff demonstrate a sense of responsibility, ambition and a commitment to continue to improve provision for children. Team meetings are held at the end of each day and these are successful in reviewing what has gone well and what needs to be developed the next day. Teaching is monitored regularly by senior staff and points for improvement are identified and adopted by staff. This enables the senior staff to identify effectively the strengths and areas for further development which are then incorporated into a plan for improvement. Monitoring and evaluation have brought about significant improvements in provision over recent years, but do not focus enough on children’s outcomes especially of the more able. Data are analysed systematically, but do not yet include all the information necessary to judge accurately children’s attainment and progress.

The governing body is supportive and encouraging to the school. A number of governors have been appointed recently and are not yet in a position to support effectively the evaluation of the school’s work. However, the governing body and senior staff have a good understanding about safeguarding procedures and the

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school adopts effective practices across all areas of its work. The school promotes links with its local community well and helps children to develop a good understanding of national and international communities throughout the curriculum.

Equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination are promoted well overall and have resulted in good progress being made by pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language. However, a few of the more able pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

The school has outstanding relationships with parents and carers. All the responses and comments on the questionnaires received from parents and carers were positive. Initiatives such as the extensive induction programme, stay and play opportunities when children first start at school, opportunities to help in classrooms and talk about their jobs as well as being kept well informed by the school about how well their children are progressing all contribute to the excellent relationships parents and carers have with school. Partnerships with the children’s centre, other local children’s centres and visitors are excellent because they help improve provision for children at the school. Partnerships with the health services and charities are good, and those with the local authority are satisfactory.

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	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

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Views of parents and carers

The table below illustrates the extremely positive views of the school held by parents and carers. Five questionnaires included written comments. These referred to the ethos and facilities at the school, their children's positive responses to the school, and comments about the headteacher and staff.

A number of these comments have been included throughout the report, but two more are included here. 'The teachers are brilliant, teaching methods are very interesting and varied. The teachers listen to the children and plan activities according to their interests', and, 'The headteacher knows every child and greets them in person each day.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Nell Gwynn Nursery School 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 35 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 96 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	86	5	14	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	91	3	9	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	26	74	8	23	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	63	12	34	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	77	8	23	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	24	69	10	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	66	12	34	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)	24	69	8	23	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	25	71	8	23	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	66	11	31	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	66	11	31	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	74	9	26	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	31	89	4	11	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



16 September 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Nell Gwynn Nursery School, London SE15 2TT

Thank you for making inspectors so welcome when we came to visit your school. We found out all sorts of interesting things. Here are some of them.

- Your school is a good one where staff look after you well and make you feel extremely safe and happy.
- You learn how to keep healthy by washing your hands after going to the toilet and eating your healthy snacks and delicious school lunches.
- You are well behaved and look after each other very well, paying attention to each other's safety and being kind to one another.
- Your teachers and other staff prepare activities that interest you and that you understand. You like going on visits out of school to places of interest including museums and the woods.
- You really enjoy your music lessons when you make music and dance to music.

We have asked your headteacher, teachers and governing body to do two things to make your school even better. These are to:

- provide some harder activities for some of you that will help you to think even harder and make faster progress
- make sure that everyone knows how well you are doing from the time you start school to when you leave.

Yours sincerely

David Shepherd
Lead inspector

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