

Effra Nursery School and Early Years Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100551
Local Authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	376411
Inspection dates	27–28 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Marshall

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	84
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Ruby
Headteacher	Ann Hitchins
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2009
School address	35 Effra Parade London SW2 1PL
Telephone number	020 7733 8425
Fax number	020 7733 6791
Email address	admin@effra.nursery.lambeth.sch.uk

Registered childcare provision	Effra Early Years Centre
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	25
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	21 January 2009

Age group	2–5
Inspection date(s)	27–28 September 2011
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors made seven observations of children working both independently and on adult-led activities, observing four teachers as well as other early years educators. They talked with children as they worked and held meetings with staff, school leaders and representatives of the governing body. The inspectors looked at documents including school policies, children's progress data, attendance figures and the centre development planning. They also scrutinised children's portfolios and a range of children's work as well as evaluating 26 questionnaire responses received from parents and carers and 21 from staff.

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

- The extent to which staff use assessment information to support and challenge children's learning and secure outstanding achievement.
- The effectiveness of leaders, including the governing body, in checking, reviewing and taking actions to raise the quality of provision in order to raise attainment, particularly in calculating.
- The effectiveness of the Early Years childcare provision.

Information about the school

Effra Nursery and Early Years Centre provides day care for 2–3 year olds and before- and after-school childcare provision and a nursery school for 3–5 year olds managed by the governing body. It shares the site with a children's centre, run by the school on behalf of the local authority, the whole provision being known locally as the Effra Early Years Centre. This inspection report is for the nursery school and Early Years childcare provision. A separate inspection was completed for the children's centre.

The Nursery school offers a flexible entitlement so children attend for different sessions on different days. A staggered entry for all 120 children who have places has been planned during September from the 28 on roll at the start of term until the Nursery reaches its full capacity in October. The Early Years childcare is open all year, five days a week from 8am to 6pm. It provides 32 places for 3-5 year olds and a maximum of 32 places for 2-3 year olds. All children have access to secure enclosed outdoor play areas. Effra Nursery and Early Years Centre is part of a Lambeth consortium of Nursery Schools that has been recognised by the DfE as one of only 16 Early Years Teaching Centres in England.

The children come from predominantly Black African, Black Caribbean and White British families as well as from a range of other minority ethnic backgrounds. Almost half of the children are learning to speak English as an additional language and of these almost all join the Nursery speaking little or no English. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average representing a range of needs. An above average proportion of children are known to be eligible for free school meals. The Nursery has achieved the Eco Flag award.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Outcomes for children, as well as all aspects of leadership and management, are excellent. Since the last inspection, staff and the governing body have continued to work hard and successfully maintained the tremendously high levels of care, guidance and support provided for children. There is a very strong focus on every aspect of the school's pastoral care that ensures that children and their families are extremely well supported. One parent commented that 'The staff have been incredibly supportive, it's an amazing place.' All staff work effectively to ensure that children achieve very well in their learning and develop exceptionally as mature and caring individuals.

Children's achievement is excellent because the school uses assessment information particularly well to adapt its extremely well-enriched curriculum to ensure that every individual's needs are met and all children fulfil their potential. This, along with outstanding teaching, enables children to make excellent progress from their starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage to when they leave to join the primary school. All staff know the children's abilities extremely well. This is because of the highly effective checks regularly made on their progress and the considerable skill with which the school adapts and targets the well-focused support it gives individual children. Adults are highly skilled at moving children's learning on through extremely good quality interventions as they play. They talk to the children about their learning and discuss their next steps regularly. As a result, children have a very good understanding of what they are learning and how to get better.

While achievement is outstanding, the whole staff work together extremely effectively constantly looking for ways to improve children's attainment and personal development further. From below expected starting points when they join, attainment is currently at above expected levels by the time they leave the Nursery. The school has focused very successfully on raising attainment for boys and is currently working to raise the profile of calculating at both the school and at home. Ensuring that high standards are maintained in all aspects of its work with the delivery of the flexible entitlement and the move to a single point of admission has been a key priority for leaders prior to this term. Consequently, all staff are firmly focused on making sure that the transition works smoothly and that children continue to get off to a flying start. This constant striving to reflect on outstanding practice and still look for ways to improve, together with leaders' accurate self-evaluation, shows the school has an excellent capacity for further improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the best practice already seen to ensure the school maintains its effectiveness following the changes to admissions criteria.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

1

Children achieve extremely well academically. They are clear about their learning and frequently talk with confidence about this, sharing their ideas willingly. During a session based on the children's fascination with pirates, children explored the concept of floating and sinking. They confidently discussed which shapes and materials they thought would make the best pirate ship, predicting which would float and why. They demonstrated considerable concentration as they tackled the problem and tested out their ideas practically. Their enthusiasm was fuelled by the well-chosen quality resources and the wealth of opportunities planned both indoors and outdoors for them to independently investigate, consolidate and extend their learning throughout the day. Attainment by the time children leave to join primary school is above average overall in all areas of learning, though less strong in aspects of problem solving, reasoning and number. Over time, children, including those at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language, make outstanding progress from starting points that, overall, are below expected levels as they enter the school. The school ensures different groups and individuals, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those eligible for free school meals, are very well targeted, enabling them to learn effectively. Consequently, all children, regardless of their ethnicity, ability or gender, make the same excellent progress.

Throughout the school and the under-three provision, children also achieve extremely well in their personal, social and emotional development. Because of the school's successful strong focus on its pastoral care, children contribute extremely effectively to the school community. This is demonstrated well through their readiness to be involved in caring for their learning environment as they look after the gardens and tidy up daily. For example, the very youngest children in the under-threes help to tidy blankets and toys after their morning nap and carefully put their own familiar soft toys away in their own trays. In addition, as part of their eco schools work children are very active in caring for the wider environment as they recycle paper in the classrooms and collect fruit scraps for their compost. Children's understanding of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle is excellent with children making very good use of the extensive outdoor learning environment to exercise and enjoying their healthy snacks daily. Children talk confidently about the healthy choices they make in what they eat and the benefits provided. Their behaviour is exemplary, both when working with an adult or playing independently, and they show considerable support for one another regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. Children have exceptional moral and social skills, and their spiritual and cultural awareness is excellent. They are extremely considerate of each other,

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valuing and celebrating each other’s differences. This helps to make the school very safe and welcoming. Children’s considerable enjoyment in learning, ability to work really well together as a team, take responsibility for their own learning and demonstrate considerable independence, along with high attendance, are key factors in their extremely strong development of workplace skills.

These are the grades for children’s outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Children’s tremendous keenness to learn is due to the exceptionally wide and varied curriculum and consistently high quality teaching. All staff play their part in delivering this rich, stimulating and engaging curriculum. Some of the key features of the outstanding teaching seen are the very good relationships adults have with children, the considerable subject knowledge of the highly trained staff, and the particularly effective questioning skills that adults use to extend and challenge children’s learning. Boys and girls alike are fully engaged. The school has been successful in raising attainment in the basic skills for boys and is now focused on numeracy. Increased opportunities to develop calculating skills are already in place with children counting as they add one more spoonful of flour as they mix ingredients to make bread or how much further one car has travelled than another. End-of-day review meetings allow staff to discuss where opportunities arise to promote calculating and number further. Other basic literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are also very effectively developed.

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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The learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, is outstanding. Children freely move between the two as they take ownership of their own learning, keen to explore and investigate all that is on offer. The extremely creative links planned between subjects help to stimulate and foster children’s considerable interest, and provide further opportunities to challenge and stretch their learning. During an activity based around what the children had done in the holidays, children created a camp using blankets, material and tables. Highly effective and targeted questioning by the teacher ensured the most able were stretched as they discussed how to make the tent darker and how to overcome the problem of seeing in the dark. Children were enthralled as they experimented with different torches and they discussed what might happen when the sun came up in the morning. Keen to capture this enthusiasm the teacher asked what they might plan to do on their camping holiday. Some children decided a trip to the seaside while another group thought a picnic would be a good idea. They showed considerable concentration as they packed bags with the food and belongings they would need, counting carefully to ensure they had enough for everyone, before setting off to continue outside. Opportunities for developing all areas of learning were provided from this one simple starting point. This approach is exceedingly successful and valued extremely highly by children, parents and carers alike.

Children’s welfare and personal, social and health needs are catered for tremendously well because the school works exceptionally closely with parents and carers as well as outside agencies where needed. Consequently, parents and carers value highly the procedures in place to support themselves and their children while they are using the under-three, child-care and nursery facilities. Similarly, they are extremely appreciative of the considerable effort the school puts into getting to know children and families as they join the school as well as ensuring the same high levels of care as they leave to join their Reception classes. Key workers build up an extremely close relationship with children and their families, regularly sharing details about children’s progress as well as being there to support when needed.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets children’s needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, supported exceptionally well by other leaders, provides a clear vision for how the school can move forward. Staff comment on the tremendously positive spirit and how ‘we change peoples’ and families’ lives and that feels

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amazing’. As part of the school’s extremely effective development planning, leaders at all levels are positively encouraged to take on responsibilities. They are highly involved in analysing the school’s results and checking teaching to see where it is most effective in order to share good practice and identify where improvements are needed. As a result, all leaders have an exceptionally clear understanding of the school’s overall strengths and weaknesses. Similarly, leaders have been rigorous in making plans to ensure the new admission policy and the flexibility in uptake of the free entitlement offered to families have not weakened the effectiveness of the school. All leaders and staff are now engaged in making sure these plans work smoothly over the next year, enabling children to have the same rich and rewarding experience as in previous years. The governing body is fully involved in making these checks and holding the school to account for its effectiveness. Considerable efforts are made by the school to involve parents and carers in every aspect of the school’s work. These extremely strong links are another of the contributory factors to the school’s outstanding success. The expertise of leaders and staff is shared with other schools to help improve their effectiveness.

All staff play their part in ensuring that safeguarding procedures are rigorous, constantly checking to ensure exemplary practice is maintained across all areas. The school’s promotion of equality and diversity is excellent. Staff ensure that there is no discrimination between groups so that all children have opportunities to flourish individually and achieve exceptionally well. In the same way the school has worked extremely hard to encourage families to play a significant part in their children’s learning. Information about each day’s activities and learning are shared on a daily basis and opportunities to attend courses and training are very much welcomed by all. Leaders have been particularly effective in promoting community cohesion at school and local levels, as well as establishing links with other cultures, ensuring that children can also engage well with others from different countries and backgrounds.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money

1

Views of parents and carers

All parental questionnaires received were positive and the overwhelming majority of the written comments expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. Evidence from the inspection supports parents' and carers' views that children enjoy school and are extremely happy and safe. They commended all aspects of the school. Typical comments included: 'I feel so lucky that my child can attend this school', 'He has taken to it like a duck to water due to the time and care taken by all the staff to help us as a family', 'I love bringing my children here, the staff and facilities are amazing' and 'It's a friendly, inclusive and good nursery'. While the response from parents and carers was below average, many had only been in the school for less than a week and commented to the inspection team this had been why they had not completed the form.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Effra Nursery School and Early Years 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 26 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 84 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	88	2	8	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	85	4	15	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	19	73	7	27	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	69	6	23	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	62	7	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	17	65	8	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	69	7	27	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)	16	62	7	27	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	19	73	6	23	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	69	5	19	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	62	10	38	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	65	9	35	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	23	88	3	12	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.



29 September 2011

Dear Children

**Inspection of Effra Nursery School and Early Years Centre, London, SW2
1PL**

Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited. We were pleased to hear how much you enjoy coming to the school and that your teachers and key workers plan such a lot of interesting things for you to do. You get on extremely well with one another and your behaviour around the school is first rate. You have an excellent understanding of how to be safe and lead a healthy lifestyle. We can see that there are lots of interesting visitors to your school and activities to get involved in, and were especially impressed with how well you look after all the plants in your gardens, get involved in recycling and right from the under-threes help to tidy up after yourselves. We understand why you think the adults are very good at helping to make you feel really safe and cared for.

Effra Nursery School and the Early Years Centre are outstanding. The curriculum planned for you meets your needs extremely well. Teachers and other adults are very good at helping you to make excellent progress in everything you do. The leaders run it particularly well. They know just what needs to be done to make it even better.

In order to help make it become even more successful we have asked the adults to work on one thing:

- make sure you keep on doing really well and enjoying your learning even though now you are all starting nursery at the same time .

You can help by continuing to respect each other's values, both in school and in later life. Thank you for helping us with our work.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Marshall
Lead inspector

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