

South Acton Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101861
Local Authority	Ealing
Inspection number	376634
Inspection dates	4–5 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Sue Vale

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	94
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Hall
Headteacher	Sue Wadhams
Date of previous school inspection	13 January 2009
School address	Castle Close Acton W3 8RX
Telephone number	020 8992 0724
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Age group	3–5
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed eight lessons and parts of lessons involving two teachers, and several support staff. They observed children working in small groups and with one-to-one support, as well as at play. The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the Nursery Officers in charge of supporting those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the teacher in charge of children new to learning English and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school documents, including assessment and tracking information, policies and procedures, safeguarding information, governing body minutes and individual children's 'records of achievement' for evidence of progress. In addition, inspectors took into account 17 questionnaires completed by parents and carers and 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.

- How effective are procedures for safeguarding?
- How effective is the provision for children who are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language?
- How effective is provision for those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities?

Information about the school

This average sized Nursery offers a wide range of services to families in the local community as it is part of a children's centre. Over three quarters of the children are from minority ethnic groups, the vast majority of whom are new to learning to speak English. The main languages spoken, other than English, are Somali, Polish, Arabic and Dari. There are four specialist units within the centre which some Nursery children attend. The units support those children with specific complex difficulties. There is an 'I Can' unit for children with complex communication difficulties situated within the Nursery. There is also a nurture group, a unit for children identified on the autistic spectrum and a special care unit for children with severe and complex special needs. There are four children with statements of special educational needs and more are awaiting full statements. The headteacher of the Nursery school is also the head of the children's centre.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

South Acton Nursery is a good school. Children are very well known as individuals. They, and their families, are at the centre of all that the Nursery plans for and does. There are excellent links with children's families, who are supported right from when their children are first visited at home. One parent commented, 'They (the Nursery) support my child a lot – he is happy going to school.' This contributes greatly to why relationships are very harmonious and why this is an exceptionally happy and inclusive school. The promotion of equal opportunities is outstanding.

Increasing numbers of children are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities and are supported extremely well in the Nursery and in the specialist units. Those children in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language are provided for equally well. All children achieve well and make good progress in developing a good range of skills as well as learning more about the world in which they live. In some areas of learning, such as physical development, many children make even better progress and exceed the levels expected for their age by the end of their time in the Nursery.

Children's behaviour is good and staff deal well with those children who find it more difficult to behave well or who are learning the art of sharing. Gentle encouragement and reassurance soon have these children back on track. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Children are well aware of what constitutes right and wrong behaviour, seen in their use of timers to wait for their turn to have a go on the swings. They get on well together and clearly feel safe. They adopt healthy lifestyles and join in several physical activities throughout the day, utilising well the excellent outdoor learning environment. Despite this enjoyment of learning, the attendance of a few children is low. The Nursery is aware that more needs to be done to encourage families to see the benefit of regular attendance for their children.

Teaching is consistently good. The most effective aspects include the way a number of staff model good language in order to support the development of children's speaking and listening skills. This is of particular help for those new to learning to speak English and those identified with speech and communication difficulties, as in the 'I Can' unit. However, this is not consistent among all staff and is an area for further development. The Nursery has very recently started a new way of assessing what children know, understand and can do in line with local authority recommendations. Because this was only instigated this term, it is still too soon to use the data gathered in order to fully assess the progress of different groups within the school. Despite this, adults make good use of the information which they already have in order to plan suitable work for individuals through an exciting and

stimulating curriculum.

The governing body is supportive and holds the school to account well. The Nursery offers good value for money and clearly demonstrates that it has good capacity to sustain the continuous rate of improvement evident since its previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed the newly instigated assessment procedures so that information gathered is easily accessible to all and clearly shows the progress made by individuals and different groups of children.
- Raise the quality of teaching to that of the best by ensuring all staff:
 - role model the correct use of English
 - use open-ended questions in order to elicit fuller responses from children.
- Raise the attendance rate through increasing parental awareness of the positive impact that regular attendance has on their children's learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

2

Children start in the Nursery with a wide range of skills and experiences, but their overall attainment on entry is well below that expected for their age. Children are keen and enthusiastic learners and they respond extremely well to the outstanding curriculum on offer. Overall, they achieve well with some children reaching above what is expected for their age, particularly in physical development. They make good progress in developing their spoken language through, for example, involvement in the initiative 'Every Child a Talker'. This was seen in storytelling sessions and focused activities when the majority of staff modelled language well and children became increasingly confident in practising their speaking skills. This is particularly pertinent for those children new to learning English and those who manifest communication difficulties. Most children are confident and happy learners, whether working in small support groups, mark making, learning how to recognise and write numbers, or creating artistic masterpieces. For example, children demonstrated good levels of concentration when working with their key workers on drawing pictures of themselves to add to their records of achievement, and, in another group, when counting out and threading beads to match to a written number. On occasions, there are children who are less confident but staff support and care for these children very well.

Healthy lifestyles are promoted strongly and children enjoy the healthy lunches on offer. However, attendance for some children is low and varies considerably between classes. The Nursery is acting on this and is working towards raising parental awareness of the importance of attending regularly.

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	1
The extent to which children feel safe	2
Children’s behaviour	2
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	3
Taking into account:	
Children’s attendance ¹	3
The extent of children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Good teaching, with some outstanding aspects, and an outstandingly stimulating curriculum ensure that children make good progress in their learning. Adults listen to the children, know their individual interests and recognise well the next steps in their learning. However, the quality of adults’ interaction with children does vary. Some staff have excellent skills in the way they question children and help develop new vocabulary and understanding about what they are doing. Occasionally, some questions only allowed children to give monosyllabic answers. While there are occasions when this is relevant to the task in hand, there were some missed opportunities to develop children’s increasing awareness of the spoken language. The Nursery is aware that there are some adults who need more help and are proactive in ensuring that individual needs are met through professional development and training. This is of particular relevance and support for those children who are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language.

The free-flow between the inside and excellent outside facilities enhances the opportunities for and supports children’s learning. Regular meetings when staff plan the curriculum around individual children’s needs and interests ensure that activities are relevant, supportive, and enhance the good progress that children make. Staff make observations and collect information for the children’s individual records of achievement. These are a good record of activities and progress and children are proud to share their achievements with their parents, carers and visitors. On top of this, the Nursery has just started to follow the local authority’s system of tracking progress and using national developmental checks. This is in its earliest stages and

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

its full impact on children’s achievement is yet to be seen. Children have the opportunity to express their own views about their progress when sharing their records of achievement with their key workers.

The care and support children receive are outstanding, although attendance figures are affected by some poorer attendees. Support for children whose circumstances might make them more vulnerable is an established part of the Nursery provision, and the children are cared for very well.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The good leadership and management of the Nursery inspire a united team who have a strong sense of purpose in helping all children to achieve to the best of their abilities. Equality of opportunity is central to all that the Nursery does and inclusion regardless of individual needs or difficulties is an outstanding feature. The school reviews its current practice in relation to the links with the children’s centre but does not specifically formally review or evaluate information related solely to the Nursery. The Nursery in partnership with the children’s centre strives to achieve the best for the children in its care. Capacity for continuous improvement is good. Governance is good: following professional development it has improved since the last inspection. The governing body is fully supportive; and fulfils its statutory duties well. Some members have been connected with the Nursery for a number of years, bringing a good knowledge and sense of stability to the leadership and management. Safeguarding procedures are adhered to with strong emphasis on the care of children and at the time of the inspection statutory requirements were met. There are excellent links with a variety of other agencies, particularly in supporting more vulnerable families and those children identified with specific learning needs. Community cohesion is outstanding, a view reflected by parents, carers and the governing body alike. Saturday workshops, family learning, fathers’ days, the involvement of families in borrowing books and mathematics games, all contribute to the outstanding ways the Nursery engages parents and carers. There are very good links with the receiving school which most children move on to, and transition is handled well.

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

Views of parents and carers

Very few parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Of those who did, the vast majority were very positive in their views regarding the Nursery, and all indicated that their children were happy and safe at Nursery.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at South Acton 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 17 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 94 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	12	71	5	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	12	71	5	29	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	13	76	4	24	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	12	71	5	29	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	11	65	5	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	11	65	5	29	1	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	59	6	35	1	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)	8	47	7	41	1	6	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	11	65	6	35	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	76	4	24	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	47	8	47	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	8	47	9	53	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	13	76	4	24	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.



5 October 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of South Acton Nursery, Ealing W3 8RX

It was lovely to meet you and watch you play when I came to visit your Nursery. I really liked some of the activities that you do. I really wanted to eat the fruit kebabs that you made and to join in with the fun you were having climbing and when you were on the swings!

- You go to a good Nursery that is led and managed well.
- The way that the Nursery includes all of you in everything is excellent.
- Adults look after you very well and make sure that there are lots of interesting things for you to do. This helps you to make good progress in your learning, and to achieve well.
- You make particularly good progress in developing your speaking and listening skills and in your physical development. For example, some of you run and jump, climb and ride bikes very well. This helps you to keep fit and healthy.
- You enjoy learning and most of you behave well.
- Your parents and carers are very pleased with your Nursery and the links between the Nursery and them are outstanding.
- The many activities that are provided for you are outstanding. They include lots of exciting things for you to do.
- Your teachers and other adults really support you in helping you to develop your skills, knowledge and understanding, particularly of the world around you.

I hope that you all continue to enjoy the fun things that there are to do. Even in good schools there are things that can be improved, so I have asked the adults to look again at the way they check your progress and assess how well you are doing. I have also asked them to raise all teaching to be the best through improving the way they ask you questions. I have also asked them to work with your parents and carers to improve your attendance. You and your families can help by making sure that you all come to Nursery every day.

Yours sincerely
Sue Vale
Lead inspector

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