

Maytree Nursery School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Unique reference number | 100553 |
| Local authority | Lambeth |
| Inspection number | 376413 |
| Inspection dates | 1–2 May 2012 |
| Lead inspector | David Shepherd |

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

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|--|--|
| Type of school | Nursery |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 2–4 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 87 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Jeannette Delaney |
| Headteacher | Rachel Hedley |
| Date of previous school inspection | 28 January 2009 |
| School address | 155 Clarence Crescent London SW4 8LN |
| Telephone number | 020 8671 3298 |
| Fax number | 020 8674 0791 |
| Email address | admin@maytree-nursery.lambeth.sch.uk |

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|---------------------------|--------------|
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Shepherd

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed teaching and learning in nine sessions led by seven different teachers and early years educators. Meetings were held with the senior staff and three members of the governing body. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at safeguarding documentation and the school's analysis of its data on children's achievement. Conversations were held informally with a few parents and carers. Questionnaires from 46 parents and carers and 21 staff were received and analysed.

Information about the school

This school is an average-sized nursery school. There are 41 children attend full-time and 46 part-time – 25 part-time during the morning and 21 part-time during the afternoon. A small minority of children (the largest ethnic group) are from a Black African heritage, with very small minorities from Black Caribbean and White British heritages. A minority of children speak English as an additional language, with many of these at the early stages of learning English. There are 23 different languages spoken in school. Nearly half of the children are known to be eligible for free school meals. Approximately one fifth of children are disabled or have special educational needs, mainly speech, language and communication difficulties or autism. The proportion of children at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average. Four members of staff have left the school during the past year following a staffing restructure. The school has gained Healthy School status. A breakfast club is held each day. The school is the lead school in a consortium of five Lambeth nursery schools which have become a national early years teaching centre. A children's centre is attached to the school and was inspected separately.

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 | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 1 |
| Leadership and management | 2 |

Key findings

- This is a good school. Relationships between adults and children are very strong, and children get on very well together. The school is not yet outstanding because progress overall is no more than good, and in mathematics satisfactory, and school leaders are not ensuring that planned improvements are specifically targeted towards children’s outcomes.
- Achievement is good. Attainment in the six areas of learning is broadly typical for this age group. Progress is quicker in speaking, listening, and early reading and writing skills than in mathematics, and is good overall. Progress in mathematics is less marked because children are not always provided with enough opportunities to develop their mathematics skills in different activities.
- Much of the teaching is good and some outstanding, and fully engages and motivates children to learn. In these sessions, teachers’ expectations of what children can achieve are high. Staff discuss what individual children have achieved at the end of each day, and then plan the next steps in learning, and this helps them make good progress.
- Children’s behaviour and safety are outstanding. Children have very positive attitudes to learning. Parents, carers and staff are extremely positive about behaviour and safety. Children’s very considerate behaviour contributes to an extremely safe and orderly environment. As a result, children carry out activities confidently because they are looked after very well.
- Monitoring and evaluation of teaching are carried out accurately and school performance is managed well. The headteacher, effectively supported by the deputy headteacher, has successfully brought about sustained improvements since the previous inspection in spite of recent changes of staff. The school improvement plan and additional action plans identify priorities correctly, but give limited detail on the measurable impact that should result. The promotion of children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

In order to become outstanding, the school should implement the following actions.

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- By July 2013, raise achievement in mathematical development from satisfactory to good by providing children with more opportunities to consolidate and extend their mathematical skills in different activities.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - extending the training of senior staff in the techniques of monitoring and evaluation
 - providing senior staff with opportunities to monitor and evaluate in their areas of responsibility
 - devising and implementing plans that lead to improvements in clearly defined measurable outcomes for children.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children start school with skills that are below those expected for their age. Some children, for example those who are at the early stages of learning English or those with special educational needs that delay their learning, start nursery with skills that are well below those expected for their age. By the time they leave, all make good progress overall from their starting points. Skill development reached is typical for their age in most areas of learning as evidenced by school data, as well as observations and in children's special books. Progress is quickest in physical development, personal development and communication, language and literacy and slowest in the development of mathematical skills.

Over the past three years, there have been no noticeable differences in achievement between children who speak English as an additional language, those from minority ethnic groups and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals. Both boys and girls achieve well. A few children lag behind others because they are at the early stages of learning English or have special educational needs, but the gap is narrowing because of the additional teaching provided for these children. A few children, whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, make exceptional progress given their particular needs.

Children are making good progress in developing their early reading skills. They have many good opportunities to enjoy books. During the inspection, children were observed enjoying the story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. Many children choose to select books from the book corner and follow pictures and stories independently, and this promotes effectively their enjoyment of books.

Children develop good levels of independence in child-initiated activities and confidently learn new skills. They enjoy choosing activities to carry out indoors and outdoors. For example, a group of children concentrated hard as they carefully filled perspex channels with coloured water using syringes. This helped to develop their handling skills and promoted effectively their skills of working together when sharing coloured water and beakers.

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Most parents and carers are positive about how well the school develops their children's skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics, and the inspector endorses their views, other than those regarding mathematics. Progress in mathematical development slows when children are not provided with enough opportunities to consolidate and extend their mathematical skills. For example, opportunities to practise counting and repeating the names of shapes they are learning are occasionally missed during activities, such as counting the number of bean bags in their hoops at the end of races or the number of children in their group.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good overall, and parents and carers agree. Adults ensure that interesting and challenging activities are well prepared indoors and outdoors. These activities have been carefully thought through by staff following planning meetings at the end of each day. At these meetings, staff review the performances of children, and then decide upon the next steps in their learning for the following day. This ensures children's needs are met effectively. Some teaching is outstanding, such as when adults enthuse and motivate children, taking every opportunity to encourage them to learn about the world around them by discussing the differences between the tadpoles in the Forest School pond in the school grounds with those in the classroom and in books. Occasionally, opportunities to develop children's independence and mathematical skills during adult-led sessions are not always taken, and, when this happens, teaching is satisfactory and not good.

Children who are disabled or those with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers because of the additional support they receive through their educational plans, which ensure adults make suitable adjustments to activities to match their different needs and abilities. Adults monitor the impact of the support given, and this enables future provision to be based on previous learning, which ensures good, and sometimes outstanding, progress.

The curriculum is planned to enable teaching to develop children's basic skills. The teaching of early reading skills is a priority and is effective in teaching children about stories. Very occasionally, opportunities to teach children the sounds made by letters are not taken, and this slows down the development of their early reading skills. The teaching of early writing is good because children have good opportunities to make marks on paper and whiteboards, and form letters and numbers correctly.

Teaching promotes outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The Forest School, with its pond, provides children with excellent opportunities to learn about the natural world and develop their curiosity about living things and living outdoors. For example, in one session, children were learning how to whittle twigs, and prepare a fire with paper and twigs in order to boil up some water. The teaching about different cultural traditions, such as St Patrick's Day and Diwali, is particularly strong and promotes children's spiritual, social and cultural development very effectively.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

Children's behaviour is exemplary and it is clear that that seen during the inspection is typical. In replies to their questionnaires, all parents, carers and staff were extremely positive about behaviour. There is no evidence of inappropriate behaviour nor bullying. The atmosphere in the Nursery is calm and industrious with happy children enjoying the wide range of activities on offer, so they behave exceptionally well. Incidences of any types of bullying, such as name calling, are extremely rare and are dealt with effectively by the school. Children work and play quietly, and talk to each other and adults confidently and maturely.

All observations during the inspection confirmed children's excellent behaviour. For example, children responded promptly to adults, showing positive attitudes and were ready to learn. They present their work to adults with due care and attention, and sustain their concentration for considerable periods of time. For example, when making pizzas children waited patiently for their turn to spread the passata on their pitta bread, and grate cheese on top of their pizzas.

In replies to their questionnaire, all parents and carers indicated that their children are safe. Children are developing a good understanding of the risks they face and how to keep safe. For example, children in the Forest School did not cross the 'exclusion zone' in preparation for lighting the fire. Children use tools and equipment safely and this reduces the risk of accidents. They learn about safety in water as they watch the tadpoles in the school pond and when they go to the swimming pool. They learn about road safety and the meaning of the red and green man at pedestrian crossings.

Leadership and management

Leaders are clearly focused on improvement and incorporate the right areas for development into plans of action. Planning does not always define the success criteria needed to evaluate the expected impact on learning. However, monitoring and evaluation of school performance are having a positive impact on achievement and the quality of education provided. Sustained improvements have been effected since the previous inspection in developing an assessment system that tracks children's performance and in the use of assessment information in teachers' planning. The key issue from the previous inspection has been implemented effectively. All staff, including teaching assistants who support disabled children and those with special educational needs, now attend the daily planning meetings, and this means that provision for these children in particular has improved, and these pupils make good, and some outstanding, progress. All these improvements indicate the school has a good capacity to sustain further improvement. An extensive programme of professional development, including the performance management of staff, is contributing effectively to school improvement, although some senior staff do not have secure expertise in the techniques of monitoring and evaluation, nor enough opportunities to monitor and evaluate performance in their areas of

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responsibility.

The curriculum is planned systematically and includes a wide range of stimulating and challenging activities that meet children's needs well. Strengths of the curriculum include the Forest School and its appeal to boys with 'War, Weapons and Super Heroes'. The curriculum is enriched by a range of visits to places of interest and visitors to school. The wide range of learning opportunities provided is helpful in supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Occasionally, the curriculum does not always promote children's mathematical skills effectively enough.

The governing body is keen, enthusiastic and shows high levels of commitment to the school. It provides a good level of challenge and has supported the school conscientiously during the recent staff restructuring. Safeguarding procedures comply fully with statutory requirements.

The school promotes equality of opportunity for all groups of pupils and tackles discrimination effectively so that all groups achieve equally well. Staff and resources are allocated effectively to pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable and there are examples of some of these pupils making outstanding progress.

Parents and carers speak positively about the benefits of having a children's centre linked to the school. This enables them to learn key skills in order to bring up their children more effectively, and prepare them for school.

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 pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| 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 pupils. 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 | 54 | 42 | 2 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 14 | 49 | 32 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 20 | 39 | 34 | 7 |
| Special schools | 33 | 45 | 20 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 9 | 55 | 28 | 8 |
| All schools | 16 | 47 | 31 | 6 |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Attendance | the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance. |
| Behaviour | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Floor standards | the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |
| Safety | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning. |

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.



3 May 2012

Dear Children

Inspection of Maytree Nursery School, London SW4 8LN

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed meeting and talking to you. You go to a good school where adults work hard to prepare you for the future. The progress you make in the different activities is good. Here are some of the best things I found.

- You enjoy school and get on very well with each other.
- You are extremely safe and work in a calm, colourful and stimulating environment.
- You like your key workers and teaching assistants and try your best to please them.
- You are very well mannered and courteous to each other and adults.
- You are enthusiastic about all the different activities provided for you. You particularly like making music and playing outside.
- You really enjoy the Forest School and looking at tadpoles.

I have asked your headteacher, teachers and the governing body to do two things to make your school even better.

- Provide you with more opportunities to learn about numbers and shapes.
- Make sure that the plans that the school has to help you learn are working well.

All of you can help by continuing to work very hard.

Yours sincerely

David Shepherd
Lead inspector

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