

Curzon Crescent Nursery School

Curzon Crescent, Willesden, London, NW10 9SD

Inspection dates 9–10 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching in the Nursery Year is not consistently good to ensure that achievement is at least good for all children.
- This term, there has been a high turnover of staff and weaknesses in teaching have not been identified quickly enough.
- Adults do not consistently check to ensure that all children are learning well.
- Adults do not always promote speaking skills effectively. Adults' expectations, regarding sitting still and listening carefully, are sometimes not high enough.
- Children are not always given good-quality experiences to help them make marks and start to form shapes which begin to look like letters and numbers.
- Leaders do not focus enough on the achievement of different groups of children when tracking their progress.
- Information about children is not always used effectively to ensure that activities are well planned to cater for children's different abilities and needs.

The school has the following strengths

- Achievement for children in the Reception class is good because they are taught well.
- Where teaching is good, well-planned activities are based on previous learning and children's interests.
- Children show good attitudes to learning and behave well. The nursery is a safe place for children to learn as they play.
- The headteacher is well supported by his team. Staff who were in the nursery last term say that systems for enabling staff to improve their practice are good.
- The curriculum provides children with exciting activities and good opportunities to visit the local area. It promotes children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the work of the nursery.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed activities in 13 parts of sessions taught by five teachers supported by four nursery nurses and two nursery assistants.
- The inspector also observed the Reception teacher and the nursery nurse who supports in the class.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, the two middle leaders, children and a few parents and carers, and a representative from the local authority. The inspector had a telephone conversation with the Chair of the Governing Body.
- The inspector observed the work of the school.
- She took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection.
- She looked at documentation, including the school's own information on the views of parents and carers, and staff; teachers' planning; the school development plan; children's performance data from the last two years; information collected when children start the nursery; children's learning journeys; documents related to safeguarding; and minutes from meetings held by the governing body.

Inspection team

Nina Bee, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Curzon Crescent Nursery School is situated within Curzon Crescent Children's Centre. Most children attend full time.
- The nursery is federated with Fawood Nursery and Children's Centre and the headteacher, along with the governing body, oversees provision in both nurseries and both children's centres.
- One of the local authority's Bulge Reception classes, for children who do not have a place in a school, is situated in the nursery. The headteacher also oversees this provision for the 17 children who are in the class this term.
- Very few children have White British backgrounds. Approximately a fifth of children are of Black Caribbean heritage and just under a fifth have Black Somali backgrounds. The remainder are from a number of minority ethnic groups.
- Almost half of the children speak English as an additional language, which is above average.
- The proportion of disabled children and those with special educational needs supported at early years action and early years action plus is below average. No children have statements of special educational needs.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching in the Nursery classes so that all sessions are at least consistently good by ensuring that adults:
 - check learning at regular intervals during all activities to make sure that all children are learning well and the session moves at a brisk pace
 - focus effectively, during all interactions, on the development of speaking and listening skills and always have high expectations regarding the importance of sitting properly when required to do so
 - give children good-quality experiences to make marks and develop early writing skills, and when appropriate, to begin to form recognisable letters and numbers.
- Improve the way data, relating to how well children are achieving, are analysed by:
 - focusing in more detail on the performance of different groups such as those who speak English as an additional language, higher-attaining children and disabled children, and those who have special educational needs
 - using this information more effectively to feed into teachers' planning so that activities are better planned to challenge the different needs and abilities of the children.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Most children start in the Nursery Year with knowledge and skills that are well below those typically expected for their ages. Speaking skills are particularly low. Although in the past children have achieved well in relation to their starting points, this is not currently the case. Teaching, which requires improvement, is not enabling children to achieve well.
- Learning and progress are inconsistent. Children progress well during some activities but in others learning and progress are not rapid enough because of weaknesses in the quality of teaching.
- Achievement is not good when teachers' planning does not clearly focus on the different abilities and needs within the group.
- Achievement in developing personal and social skills is good during lunchtime when children sit and eat alongside adults. Children are supported well and encouraged to serve themselves as they choose what they want to eat. Personal and social skills are promoted well and children are encouraged to sit smartly and use their knives and forks properly.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Senior leaders and managers have a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers who have worked in the nursery for a number of years say that the use of appraisal and performance management, supported by appropriate professional development, has helped to improve their practice.
- Over half of the teachers and nursery nurses are new this term and weaknesses in the quality of teaching have not been identified quickly enough. As a result, teaching requires improvement.
- The best teaching ensures that the children participate fully and are actively involved in their learning. Out in the garden as they did some pond dipping, excited children were expertly questioned so that all abilities were involved, at all times. The activity was well resourced and children were given magnifiers so that they could see plants and pond life really clearly. Children showed great care and much enthusiasm and consideration for a snail they watched move. Safety was high focus throughout and learning was good because good teaching enabled all children to be totally engrossed in what they were doing as they worked effectively together.
- Although children's safety is paramount at all times, occasionally, there are times when adults do not intervene quickly enough.
- Where teaching is weaker, planning of activities does not appropriately challenge the different abilities within the group. Questioning is too general and, as a result, not all children are fully involved and learning is not fast enough for too many.
- During interactions with individuals or small groups, adults too frequently move learning on without checking that all children understand what they have learnt or what they are to do next.
- Children have many opportunities to make marks in different ways and to eventually become confident at using pencils and pens. However, adult-focused activities do not always ensure that the skills needed to do this are emphasised effectively.
- Not all adults have high enough expectations with regard to sitting properly and listening attentively. Many children are reluctant talkers and say little. When speaking skills are not promoted effectively, children are not given time to process information and speak. At other times, adults speak too fast for children to follow their instructions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

Are good

- Children generally attend well and their behaviour is good. They quickly develop good relationships with the adults who support them, show good attitudes to learning and freely chose activities at the start of the day. Although a few have difficulty settling, almost all children settle in quickly.
- Adults usually have high expectations regarding behaviour and manage behaviour well. Many children have little speech but this does not stop them playing with or alongside each other amicably. Very little anti-social or aggressive behaviour was seen during the inspection because children are encouraged to get on with each other.
- Clear procedures for recording poor behaviour are in place, although there are no recorded incidents of bullying or exclusions. Racist incidents are extremely rare. All classrooms have logs to record any accidents or incidents and there are thorough procedures to inform parents and carers.
- On the very few occasions when behaviour is not good, it is usually to do with weaknesses in teaching and the expectations of adults being too low. For example, when in a small group situation, adults do not always adequately focus on the need to sit properly and listen. As a result, a few children move around and shout out, and learning slows down.
- Generally, the nursery is a safe and secure place for children to have fun, learn and play. Staff work hard to create a safe and stimulating learning environment both inside and out.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Previous performance data show that, since his appointment, the headteacher and his team have enabled children to make better progress than is currently the case.
- This term, however, over half of the teachers and nursery nurses are new to the nursery. The high turnover of staff has dramatically altered the quality of teaching. Despite there being good systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching, this term, senior leaders have not focused effectively on identifying the weaknesses in teaching. As a result, leadership and management require improvement.
- Procedures for performance management are thorough, and in place in relation to the new guidance. Staff who have been working in the nursery for a few years say they have been well supported professionally and that their practice has improved.
- Staff work hard to ensure there is no discrimination and the welfare of all children is closely monitored. Less emphasis has been placed on tracking the academic progress of different groups such as higher-attaining children, those who speak English as an additional language, and disabled children and those with special educational needs. Consequently, equal opportunities are only adequately promoted.
- School improvement planning is well focused and self-evaluation is generally accurate. Parents and carers are supportive of all the nursery does for their children and any evaluations or questionnaires they fill in show much satisfaction and appreciation.
- The curriculum provides children with interesting and exciting opportunities which particularly focus well on children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Much excitement and amazement was observed as children carefully let a slug, which they found in soil, move along their hands. Children quickly learn how to behave well and all cultures are celebrated and valued. Children, from many different cultures and backgrounds, get along happily with one another as they play and learn. The curriculum does not allow all children to achieve well because of weaknesses in teaching.
- Provision for children in the Reception class is good. They receive good-quality support in all they do and achieve well.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Since the previous inspection, the governing body is much more informed about the work of

the school. It is involved well in school development planning and has a clear idea of children's progress from year to year.

- Because they are better informed through visits to school, reports and discussions with staff, governors are able to support and challenge the nursery effectively.
 - The governing body takes its safeguarding responsibilities seriously. Safeguarding arrangements are secure and statutory requirements are met. As a result, children play and learn in a safe and secure environment.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	101489
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	400356

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	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Estella Magloire
Headteacher	Mark Cole
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 December 2009
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Fax number	020 8459 6903
Email address	markcole@curzon.brent.sch.uk

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