

# North Islington Nursery School

110 Tollington Park, London, N4 3RB

**Inspection dates** 6–7 November 2012

|                                |                      |              |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Good         | 2        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Good         | 2        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Good         | 2        |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Good         | 2        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Children achieve well. Those who need extra help, those who are at risk of not doing well and children speaking English as an additional language make good progress from their starting points.
- The school is improving. Since the previous inspection, leaders, managers and governors have worked successfully together with the staff to secure good teaching and raise children's achievement.
- Friendly and caring relationships help children to settle quickly and enjoy their time at school.
- Children behave well because adults make consistently clear what is expected and provide strong role models. Children have a good awareness of how to use resources and equipment safely.
- Teaching staff plan interesting activities for children to do in the inside and outdoor areas. They regularly lead activities, promoting children's understanding and deepening their knowledge through high-quality discussions and questioning.
- Regular and detailed observations of children's interests and progress are used effectively to plan adult-directed tasks that are set at the right level.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The range of activities for children to select for themselves is not always planned carefully enough to develop children's independence and build swiftly on what they know and can do already.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector spent over four hours observing teaching and learning in all classes.
- Staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority held discussions with the inspector.
- The inspector looked at samples of children’s work in learning portfolios, observation records of children’s learning, and analysis of data showing children’s attainment and progress.
- The school’s development plans and records relating to safeguarding children were also seen.
- The inspector took account of six responses to the online Parent View survey, analysis of a recent survey of parents’ and carers’ views, and held informal discussions with parents and carers.

## Inspection team

Madeleine Gerard, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized nursery compared with similar schools.
- Most children attend part time, mornings or afternoons, or full days for part of the week.
- A higher proportion than the national average speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of children supported through early action, at early action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average. Most of these children have speech, language and communication needs.
- The local authority chooses to use pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government) to fund 23 places across the Nursery and day-care provision. These places are allocated to children at risk of not doing well.
- The school manages day-care provision for children below two years of age and for children up to age three, as well as breakfast and after-school clubs. There is no alternative provision at this school.
- There have been a number of staffing changes since the previous inspection, including to the leadership team.
- The children's centre, which shares the same site, was not inspected as part of this inspection.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By May 2013, ensure activities for children to choose for themselves help them to work on their own to build on their knowledge and skills so they make even swifter progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school with skills and capabilities that are generally below the levels expected for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning, including communication, language and literacy skills and in their personal, social and emotional development. By the time they leave the Nursery, their attainment overall is well within expectations for children of this age.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they receive extra support and additional guidance that is carefully planned to develop their language skills and their social and emotional development. They establish positive relationships with adults and children. They benefit from regular sessions tailored to support their development with well-trained staff and specialist therapists.
- Children who speak English as an additional language make good progress because they practise their listening and speaking skills regularly with the adults. They listen attentively and join in with songs and storytelling with enthusiasm. Children who are at risk of not doing well respond positively to the nurturing and individualised care that the school provides and catch up quickly with their peers.
- Learning is typically enthusiastic and focused. Children are eager to get involved in activities as soon as they can and particularly enjoy working and playing alongside adults and other children. Working with an adult, children were sorting through a basket full of shoes to find the matching pairs. They listened very carefully to questions about the features of different shoes that the adult asked them in order to accurately pair the shoes together. Another group of children developed their knowledge of safe travel on public transport through the imaginative role play of a bus journey to the cinema.
- Younger children in the day-care provision are happy and develop their self-confidence quickly. Adults model warm and friendly relationships and promote children's social skills strongly. Their physical abilities develop well. They regularly use the soft climbing equipment inside and enjoy a good variety of climbing, balancing and movement activities in the outdoor areas.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching staff plan engaging tasks based on storybook themes that reflect children's developing enthusiasms and interests. Older children explored a book about aliens in space and were observed thinking hard as they built models of spaceships using recycled materials. In another group, they used construction blocks to make their own alien. Working with an adult, other children practised their mark-making and writing skills using felt pens to draw aliens. They enjoyed the challenge of counting the number of eyes and ears they had drawn on their aliens, and writing their own names on their work.
- Detailed observations of children's learning are used by staff to check the progress they are making and to plan further activities that help them to develop their skills. Effective teamwork ensures staff are aware of what individual children need to do next in order to reinforce new learning and build on their knowledge.
- Sometimes, activities for children to choose for themselves are not as carefully planned. As a result, opportunities for children to work by themselves are more limited. This means children's progress in developing their independence, and in taking responsibility for their own learning, is not as consistently brisk.
- Well-qualified staff and specialist therapists work closely with disabled children and those who have special educational needs. They help them to access similar tasks and activities to other children, and carefully choose suitable resources. During group reading time, disabled children and those with special educational needs took turns to lift the flaps in a book and repeat familiar parts of the story.

- Children's self-esteem is boosted through taking photographs of their work to include in their learning portfolios and discussing what they have been learning with adults individually and in small groups.
- The breakfast and after-school clubs provide a calm and enjoyable start and finish to the day for children who attend. In the breakfast club, children were sensibly selecting what they wished to eat for breakfast. After eating, children of different ages socialised and played well together.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Structured settling-in arrangements support children and their families effectively when they join the nursery school or day-care provision. This, together with opportunities for parents and carers to spend time with their children in classrooms at the start of the morning or afternoon sessions, ensures children feel safe and welcome when they start and helps staff to build strong links with parents and carers.
- Children are enthusiastic to take part in activities and group work led by adults. They are not always as consistently confident to start independent work or initiate games for themselves.
- Adults clearly explain to children how to keep themselves safe from harm. For example, children making fruit kebabs followed the adult's instructions well and used cutting tools efficiently and safely. Staff help them to learn how to assert themselves calmly, or seek help should any problems occur.
- Regular outings and visits to nearby places of interest develop children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe when outside school. Through partnership with the children's centre, children receive visits from local emergency services, including community police officers and fire fighters, and learn about the jobs they do.
- The school clearly emphasises the importance of attending regularly and on time to enable children to benefit from daily routines and valuable learning time.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Leaders, managers and members of the governing body work closely as a team. Together with staff, they secure good teaching, interesting project work, and regular themed events, outings and visits.
- They promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Celebration of festivals from a wide variety of cultures and faiths fosters good relations, developing children's knowledge of their community and respect for one another. Growing vegetables and flowers in the outdoor spaces, observing hatching chicks and visiting farms and wildlife centres encourage children's caring attitudes.
- Accurate self-evaluation helps the school's leaders to identify the most appropriate priorities for improvement. As a result, they have successfully introduced improvements to systems for checking the progress children make. They have also improved the way adults use their observations of children's progress when planning the next steps in their learning. Significant redevelopment of the outdoor spaces has effectively increased children's physical development and their understanding of the natural world.
- Teaching is well led. Since the previous inspection, regular checks of teaching quality, detailed feedback and targets for improvement, together with well-selected training, have improved the overall quality of teaching and raised children's achievement.
- Some leaders have only recently been appointed to their posts. They are not systematically checking whether activities for children to choose help them to learn how to work by themselves.
- Through close partnerships, particularly with the children's centre and a wide range of outside agencies, the school successfully supports the achievement and well-being of children at the school, and their families.

- All groups of children achieve well reflecting the school's success in tackling discrimination to ensure equality of opportunity.
- The local authority provides appropriate support and has been effective in helping the school to secure the good overall effectiveness of its work.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body have a good awareness of the school's strengths and what it needs to do to improve. They work closely with the school's senior leaders on development planning. Governors fulfil their role in managing performance well. They check the progress that is made against agreed success criteria and make clear links between teachers' performance and salary progression. They use information from monitoring to check that the quality of teaching improves securely and is consistently good. The governing body ensures that statutory duties are met and that financial management is robust so that the school's resources are well managed.

## 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

|                                |           |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 100386    |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Islington |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 400412    |

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

|  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Nursery                             |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                           |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 0–5                                 |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                               |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 52                                  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                  |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Nick Charlesworth                   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Ian Senior                          |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 3–4 March 2010                      |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 020 7527 4844                       |
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