

Hampden Way Nursery School

Hampden Way, Southgate, London, N14 5DJ

Inspection dates 12–13 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Children achieve extremely well in all aspects of their development and all areas of learning. From broadly expected levels when they join the nursery they make rapid gains in their skills and understanding. As a result most leave to join school with skills and understanding ahead of the expected levels, for some by over a year.
- All staff are enormously skilled at extending children's learning, using particularly effective questioning and discussion as they play. Information about children's skills and understanding is used exceptionally well to make sure that every child's learning needs are fully met and all, including those children new to learning English, reach their potential.
- All staff are integral to planning exciting, challenging experiences that build on children's interests particularly well. This means that children are really keen to talk about what they are doing.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs receive excellent support. This allows families to play an important part in their children's education and ensures these children make the same outstanding progress as their peers.
- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is acknowledged by parents, carers, staff, governors and the local authority alike. Together with other staff they constantly strive to make Hampden Way the best it can possibly be for the children. Maintaining and building upon the outstanding quality of teaching and children's achievement since the previous inspection has been a top priority.
- Key governors play an extremely supportive role to the school's leaders and have become increasingly effective in checking how well the school is doing. With almost a quarter of the governing body new to their posts, governors have recognised the need to provide a range of training and initiatives quickly to develop similar levels of effectiveness for those new to their roles.
- An exceptionally warm, caring, safe atmosphere is provided by staff that results in children forming close trusting relationships with adults. Children in the Nursery and the breakfast and tea clubs really love learning and behaviour is excellent because children learn to consider and respect others.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector made over 26 observations of children working both independently and on adult-led activities, observing teachers, nursery nurses, teaching assistants and other staff; she was accompanied by the headteacher for over three quarters of these. The inspector also visited the breakfast and tea-time clubs as well as observing lunchtime for a group of children.
- Meetings were held with staff, school leaders, four members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 32 responses to the online Parent View survey as well as analysing previous parental surveys. In addition, she talked to a number of parents and carers informally as they dropped off or collected their children throughout the inspection. Questionnaires from 14 staff and leaders were also considered.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at examples of the the children's work, and also scrutinised documentation, including policies relating to safeguarding, information on children's progress, the checks carried out on staff performance and the school's development planning.

Inspection team

Jacqueline Marshall, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized nursery school. Its facilities include the Nursery and extended day care for children from three to five years old.
- The majority of children are from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages. Approximately a third of the children speak English as an additional language, with 17 different home languages spoken. When they join the nursery most are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled children and those with special educational needs, supported at early years action, is below average.
- The proportion supported through early years action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- No children receive support through the pupil premium, which is additional government funding for those entitled to free school meals, looked after children or children of service families, because of their age.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further strengthen leadership and management by developing the skills of new governors so that they quickly become as effective as other governors in checking how well the school is doing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children show considerable enjoyment in learning. They challenge themselves to try new things, knowing that adults will always be there to help, and increasingly act independently. The way they work really well together, take responsibility for their own learning and develop independence are key factors in their extremely positive attitudes towards learning.
- Their starting points are typically in line with those expected for their age. However, they have a wide range of skills and knowledge on entry, with a third joining with skills at higher levels than typically found and the other two thirds with skills that are below. For those starting with below expected levels of skills, their achievement demonstrates the substantial gains they make in narrowing the gap between their attainment and that of other children nationally. More-able children are challenged extremely effectively and their achievement too shows the very considerable gains they make.
- Irrespective of their starting points, all children, including groups such as those who would be eligible for free school meals, make outstanding progress in all areas of learning. Consequently, most achieve above age-related expectations by the time they leave, and a higher proportion than average do even better than this.
- The development of children's spiritual, moral and social skills is exceptionally good because the school gives it a high priority. Their cultural awareness is excellent, with parents and carers willingly playing a vital role in helping the school to offer a particularly wide range of rich experiences.
- Leaders use information on children's progress highly effectively to identify areas for improvement. Boys' writing skills had previously been a weaker area of understanding. Following a highly successful focus on promoting mark making and writing in all areas of learning, children made particularly good gains in their writing skills last year.
- There is a strong focus on developing children's speaking and listening skills and as a result, children make excellent gains in their literacy skills. Children, including those at an early stage of learning English as an additional language, disabled children and those with special educational needs, all make outstanding gains in literacy.
- Stories, books and reading are all promoted extremely well by adults. The skills of linking sounds and letters (phonics) are quickly developed and children use these to recognise and write their own names. While all enjoy a wide range of mark-making activities, some are beginning to use their phonic skills to attempt to spell unknown words. For example, one child made labels for her map of her journey to school.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Adults develop exceptionally close relationships with children and their families. Parents and carers appreciate the regular opportunities to share details about children's progress. Families of disabled children and those with special educational needs speak highly of the efforts of the staff. This success is because staff, who are acutely aware of each child's learning and personal development needs, tailor focused sessions and experiences extremely effectively in response to these.
- Adults have an excellent understanding of how young children learn. They are particularly adept at challenging children to try new things, work together, take responsibility for their own learning and develop independence. These are key factors in children's extremely positive attitudes towards learning. All staff play their part in delivering this rich, stimulating and engaging range of learning opportunities. Even a mundane task of picking up litter became an opportunity to reinforce taking turns. A group of boys helped the caretaker and as a result of his very good modelling, successfully developed the fine motor skills needed to squeeze the trigger action of the litter picker.

- Checks on children's progress are extremely thorough, constantly carried out and regularly summarised in children's profiles, their 'blue books'. Children regularly look through these, discussing the progress they have made since they joined the Nursery. Parents and carers really value the chance these give them to be part of their children's learning and understand how children learn at this early stage.
- The information staff gather on children's progress is used exceptionally well to inform long-term planning, as well as to plan activities and experiences for the next day. Children's own interests and abilities are built upon and their learning moved forward extremely well as adults actively play alongside children. They model activities and engage their interest, providing encouragement or posing challenging questions. Learning is stretched even further and gets children thinking more deeply.
- The breakfast and tea club, lunch and snack time meals provide very good opportunities to develop children's independence and social skills. Children help pour drinks for each other, chop and peel fruit, and tidy away once they have eaten. Adults are very skilful in their questioning and use these as another chance to extend children's speaking.
- Throughout the nursery, every part of the building and outside area is used imaginatively to provide new experiences, giving outstanding learning opportunities. For example, gauzy pieces of material were hung up outside around a raised area of blocks to create an instant stage. Children performed enthusiastically, twirling pompoms, wielding microphones and moving to the music. Boys and girls alike worked alongside one another developing their routine. One girl decided she was going to become a caterpillar and crawl along the stage as the 'Ugly Bug Ball' music played.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The school's promotion of equality and diversity is excellent. Staff make sure that there is absolutely no discrimination between groups so that all children have the same excellent opportunities to flourish individually and achieve exceptionally well. As a result, children are extremely considerate of each other, valuing and celebrating each other's differences. Children's behaviour is exemplary when working with an adult or playing independently.
- Staff deal promptly with instances of unwanted or unkind behaviour, teaching children how to empathise with others and to resolve conflicts amicably. As a result, children confidently put up their hand and tell others, 'Stop it, I don't like it', knowing that the other children will respect their feelings and stop.
- Children's understanding of how to stay safe is excellent. They experiment with new activities because adults are there to help if they need them. Negotiating the climbing frame, using the woodworking bench or scrambling over the huge tree trunk are all safe daily experiences because they know adults are there to help if they need them and have been shown how to do these things safely.
- The 'forest school' experience similarly provides a wealth of opportunities for the children to learn about risk and how to keep safe. Not only are they aware of their own safety but also readily take care of other children. For example, spotting some fungi, one boy exclaimed, 'You mustn't touch them! You don't eat them!'
- Strong links with families, supported through home visits, mean that children develop very trusting relationships with staff. In addition, parents and carers respond positively to the school's drive to ensure that children attend regularly and arrive punctually. They overwhelmingly agree that their children are safe and really enjoy coming to school.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher's outstanding leadership and deep knowledge of early years practice and how children learn and develop, provide the relentless drive and very clear vision of how the school can constantly develop and improve. The school is held in high regard within the local authority

and used to disseminate best practice. The school has very strong links with other schools, which enable staff to share resources and to learn from others.

- The headteacher has fostered a tremendously positive team atmosphere. Staff acknowledge it is 'friendly and warm' with 'everyone working towards the same ethos', making a 'highly skilled and professional team'. Staff willingly take on leadership responsibilities, running forest school sessions and developing children's profiles. As a result, school leaders are able to focus consistently on improving the quality of teaching. The process of setting targets for teachers to improve their performance is rigorous. The provision for the training of all staff is excellent and highly appreciated by staff who feel 'extremely well supported', explaining there are 'continuous opportunities for me to further myself'.
- The local authority provides the school with light touch support. Its main role has been to provide leaders with opportunities to share their practice, act as consultants, be involved in new initiatives and benefit from the wider network of early years practice across the local authority.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Since the previous inspection, the established governors have worked very hard to make sure they are fully involved in checking for themselves the progress the school makes towards achieving its priorities for development. They provide excellent challenge to leaders, holding the headteacher to account very effectively for how well the school is doing. They check rigorously that promotion and pay are related closely to teachers' effectiveness in ensuring children's academic progress and personal development. Safeguarding checks are rigorous and requirements are met. Consequently, even while out in the woods as part of the forest school they know children are in safe places to work and learn. Governors are clear about how the school supports particular groups of children. They know what any additional money is spent on, and how effective it is in ensuring the impressive progress of the children involved. As a quarter of governors are new to their roles, the governing body is developing a range of training opportunities and using experienced governors to act as mentors to help bring them up to date with current practice and thinking.

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	101252
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	400467

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	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Denise White
Headteacher	Jodi McCallum
Date of previous school inspection	28–29 January 2010
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