

Maples Children's Centre

East Churchfield Road, Acton, London, W3 7LL

Inspection dates 15–16 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children achieve well and make good progress as a result of good teaching.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs benefit from additional support carefully tailored to their needs and make outstanding gains.
- Children are happy and enthusiastic to learn because staff plan engaging experiences for them that reflect their interests. They have plenty of activities to choose for themselves in the inside and outdoor areas.
- Relationships are positive and encouraging. Adults make their expectations consistently clear and provide strong role models. Children behave extremely well in the school's calm and safe environment, and know how to keep themselves safe.
- The school's leaders have successfully maintained good quality teaching, children's good achievement and outstanding behaviour since the previous inspection.
- Governors are well informed and provide a good balance of support and challenge. They visit the school regularly and check how well the school is doing.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Occasionally, activities are not as carefully matched to the needs of the most able children in order to build on what they know and can do already, and move them on quickly in their learning.
- Points for improvement given to teachers are not all followed up rapidly by leaders to help raise the quality of teaching further.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector spent nearly six hours observing teaching and learning during morning and afternoon sessions, including more than four hours in joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspector held discussions with staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Work in children's learning journals, and the school's information showing children's achievement, were evaluated.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents provided by the school, including minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school action plan, the self-evaluation report, records of the monitoring of lessons and information relating to teachers' performance management and professional development. The school website, and records relating to safeguarding were also checked.
- The inspection took account of 30 responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View), and spoke to parents and carers informally. Inspectors also took account of nine responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Madeleine Gerard, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Maples Children's Centre is an average-sized nursery school. There are 50 part-time places each in the morning and afternoon, as well as 12 full-time places.
- Over a third of the children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and over a third speak English as an additional language.
- A very few children are supported through early school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school organises and manages breakfast and after-school provision.
- The children's centre and the provision for children under two years old that share the school site are the subject of separate inspection arrangements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure the most able children always have activities to do that are at the right level of difficulty so they build upon their skills quickly.
- Make sure that development priorities identified through checks on teaching are followed up in later observations so that rapid improvements are secured.

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. Personal, social and emotional development and literacy skills are often the weakest aspects. Children make good progress in their learning because they benefit from good teaching so that the large majority reach age-related levels of skills by the time they leave to start the Reception Year. They make particularly rapid progress in mathematical and physical development.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make very rapid gains in their development of skills. They benefit from personalised additional support and guidance that helps them to benefit from all the school has to offer.
- Children at the very early stages of learning English quickly improve their skills in spoken English because they work individually and in small groups with specialist staff. As a result, they build their knowledge of key vocabulary well and develop assurance in speaking English.
- Children take pleasure in sharing stories and books with the adults during small-group sessions. They listen carefully and enjoy joining in with familiar rhymes and repeating out loud the parts of stories they can remember. Children develop an appreciation of books through borrowing them from the school's library to read with parents and carers at home, and through choosing picture books to look at in both the indoor and outside areas.
- Children's mathematical skills grow quickly because children are encouraged to count regularly, practise simple calculations and solve problems for themselves. Children working with an adult were observed counting toy bears and calculating the total when they added one more, or took one away.
- They are keen to get on with activities as soon as they can and are confident to choose for themselves in the inside and outdoor areas. They maintain their interest in what they are doing, work hard and concentrate well. This was illustrated in an activity where the children were using magnifying glasses to examine earthworms and other insects in the garden. They enjoyed comparing their length, and counting the number of legs the insects had.
- Although they make good progress overall, the progress of the most able children is not always brisk enough. This happens when activities are not sufficiently focused on what the next steps are to help them develop new skills quickly and move up to the next level in their learning.
- Inspection observations showed children develop physical control and coordination well. Plenty of planned activities in the outdoor spaces effectively promote children's physical development so that they make strong gains. They enjoy climbing on apparatus and using scooters. They quickly learn to put on their coats to keep warm in the outside areas, and appreciate the fresh fruit snacks they are given. Children working inside with an adult were observed confidently using cutlery to make healthy cucumber sandwiches to eat.

The quality of teaching is good

- Effective staff teamwork ensures there are a wide variety of resources available in the inside and outdoor areas, as well as engaging adult-led activities that capture children's interest and help them to develop their skills quickly.
- The inspection observations showed that children's independence and resilience were well fostered when they were encouraged to choose activities for themselves. Children quickly learn to use tools and equipment with skill, including cutting scissors and painting tools. During adult-directed tasks, children were observed effectively developing additional skills and competencies.
- Staff make careful observations of children's interests and enthusiasms and use the information to plan further activities and challenges to help children extend their interests.
- The pace of learning for the most able children is not as consistently brisk when the tasks and activities planned for them are not as carefully tailored in order to build on what they know and

can do already.

- Home learning activities help children to further develop their skills. All children have opportunities to borrow books to read at home. Selected children, including those at the very early stages of learning English, benefit from optional additional activities to complete with parents and carers to help boost their skills quickly.
- Relationships between staff and the children are consistently positive and encouraging so that children feel very safe and readily tackle new experiences. Children's progress was accelerated when adults were observed asking thought-provoking questions and making sure children had time to reflect and find answers for themselves.
- Children attending the breakfast club choose from a healthy menu of food at the start of the day. They eat a cooked meal and participate in activities that the staff organise in the after-school club to help them enjoy the end of the day.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Children make an exceptional contribution to their own learning. They thoroughly enjoy getting on with tasks independently and participate enthusiastically in all the activities the adults plan for them. They behave outstandingly well in the inside and outdoor areas, and have extremely positive attitudes to school.
- Adults strongly prioritise social skills and are excellent role models so that relations are consistently positive and welcoming. In the survey, all the parents and carers who responded confirmed that their child was happy at school. Children from a wide variety of different backgrounds work and play exceptionally well together because equality is promoted and discrimination tackled highly effectively.
- Children very quickly understand the importance of turn-taking and sharing resources fairly. They make excellent use of sand timers and waiting lists for example, to help make sure all the children have an equal turn to use the computers and join in adult-directed activities.
- Adults consistently explain to children how to keep safe. They help them to learn to walk sensibly in the inside spaces, to wear aprons for messy tasks and to wash their hands regularly. In the survey, there were no parents or carers who did not feel that the school makes sure the children are well behaved, and none disagreed that bullying is dealt with effectively.
- Home visits by staff before children join the school and structured settling-in arrangements support children and their families when they start. Routines ensure that children feel very safe, settle very quickly and make friends readily.
- Children arrive punctually. The school very strongly 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

- The headteacher, together with the deputy headteacher and governors, is ambitious for the school. Working as a strong team together with the staff, they have maintained the good quality of the school's work and its good overall effectiveness since the previous inspection.
- Senior leaders have developed the curriculum to help children to develop their independence, and introduced improved systems to check the progress children make in order to identify where the school can do better. They have continued to work very closely with parents and carers to help them support their children's learning and development.
- Links with the children's centre are very strong and help the school to offer workshops and courses for parents and carers to help them develop their skills, including in English language, parenting and helping their children to read.
- Senior leaders and governors check the quality of teaching and planning regularly. Appropriate targets for improvement are identified during the monitoring of teaching, although these are not

always followed up quickly so that rapid and lasting improvements are made to further raise the quality of teaching.

- Activities supporting children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are carefully organised. Children learn about a wide variety of world festivals, enjoy weekly music sessions and examine the natural world through growing fruit and vegetables in the school's allotment garden. They made lavender bags using the lavender flowers that they harvested from the plants in the gardens.
- Through all these strengths the school demonstrates capacity to improve further.
- The local authority provides good financial support and light-touch guidance for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
- The governing body works closely with senior leaders with a shared determination to drive improvements. Governors have worked with leaders to improve the checks made on children's progress from their starting points, and examine the school's information about how well children achieve. They know what the school does well and where it must do better, including the quality of teaching. They take their role in performance management seriously and are making sure that there are clear links between teaching quality, the impact on children's learning and salary. Governors attend appropriate training to support them in their role.

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	101858
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	425492

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	84
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Mawer
Headteacher	Mia Ospovat
Date of previous school inspection	30 November–1 December 2010
Telephone number	020 87437128
Fax number	020 87491656
Email address	head@maplesnursery.com

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