

# Children's House Nursery School

92 Bruce Road, Bow, London, E3 3HL

**Inspection dates** 23–24 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
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's achievement is outstanding. They start school needing a lot of support for their learning, but make exceptionally good progress to reach the levels expected for their age by the time they move on to primary school. The love and enjoyment for learning that they have developed prepares them extremely well for this next stage in their learning.
- Teaching is outstanding and brings out the best in each child. Teachers, early years educators and other adults all have high expectations and children enthusiastically soak up the challenges on offer, gaining confidence and developing their independence rapidly.
- Children from different backgrounds and groups, including disabled children, those with special educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English, make excellent progress because their needs are quickly understood and skilled support is put in place.
- Children really love learning and as one parent explained, 'He's desperate to get back even when he's ill.' Trusting relationships with adults are formed as a result of the exceptionally warm, caring, safe atmosphere staff provide. Behaviour is excellent because
- There is a culture of high aspiration and success for all. Children have a rich and stimulating learning experience, inspired by an innovative range of topics and themes which help to motivate them and contribute strongly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Exceptionally strong partnerships with parents and carers are a cornerstone of the nursery and children's learning. This and other work to enhance children's and families' first experience of education have been locally and nationally recognised. Parents and carers are unanimous in praising the work of the staff and the extremely wide range of opportunities they provide for their children and themselves.
- Leadership is outstanding. School leaders are highly supportive of the vision to continually improve and are powerful role models around the school and the wider community. Staff support for the headteacher has maintained the high levels of achievement and commitment to children and their families.
- The governing body plays an important and successful role in supporting and challenging the school, to help drive improvements.

children learn to consider and respect others.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed sessions or part sessions both indoors and outdoors. She was accompanied by the headteacher for over half of these. As well as looking at work and interactions during sessions she scrutinised a range of work and adults' observations from the children's learning journals.
- The inspector took account of the 10 responses to the online Parent View survey as well as talking to parents and carers informally during the inspection. Two letters from parents and the school's most recent surveys of parents and carers were also considered.
- She chatted to children informally throughout the inspection, attended story time, a session teaching children the sounds letters make (phonics) and breakfast and yoga clubs. Children's behaviour was observed in sessions and at various times around the school.
- The inspector spoke with three school governors and held a telephone call with a representative of the local authority. She spoke to school staff, including senior leaders. The views of eight staff, who completed the staff questionnaire, were also taken into account.
- The inspector looked at documentation such as policies, including those relating to safeguarding and behaviour, the school's development planning as well as information on children's progress and attendance figures. She observed lunchtime as well as looking at the school's website.

## Inspection team

Jacqueline Marshall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average sized Nursery providing education and support for children and families in the Bow area.
- Almost all the children are of Bangladeshi heritage while the rest are from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. A greater than average proportion of the children speak English as an additional language and some years this rises to almost all the children. Most are at the early stages of learning English when they join the Nursery.
- The proportion of disabled children and those with special educational needs, supported at early years action is above average. The proportion at early years action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above the national average.
- No children are entitled to the pupil premium funding because of their age. However, an above-average proportion of children are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school has recently been awarded Healthy Early Years status for the second time and the Walk to School platinum award. It is the regional walk to school champion for the South East of England. It has achieved the Healthy Families Parent Ambassador School award and the established level award for Quality in Extended Services. In 2011–2012 it was Nursery World's 'Nursery of the Year'.

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

- Extend further the role of the school in supporting and sharing best practice at both local and wider levels.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- During their time in the Nursery children achieve extremely well in their physical, personal, social and emotional development, as well as in their communication and language, because of the highly effective teaching and support they receive. Consequently, although children have a range of skills and knowledge on entry, and their starting points are typically well below those usually found nationally, by the time they leave the Nursery all children, including groups such as those known to be eligible for free school meals, have made outstanding progress in all areas of learning. Any gaps with their peers nationally have been closed and they join Reception classes in local schools with the skills and understanding that are expected for their age.
- Children show marked enjoyment in learning. They challenge themselves to try new things, knowing that adults will always be there to help and, increasingly, they act independently. Their ability to work, take responsibility for their own learning and their considerable independence are key factors in their extremely positive attitudes towards learning.
- Children, including those at an early stage of learning English as an additional language, disabled children and those with special educational needs, all make excellent gains in literacy. They do so well in communication and language because of the strong focus on developing their speaking and listening skills. A whole-school focus initiative on providing children with every opportunity to mark make alongside more discrete teaching of letter formation has successfully driven up children's levels of writing since the last inspection. As a result the majority of children for the last three years have left with expected levels in their writing for their age.
- Equal opportunities are rigorously promoted and no pupil is denied access to anything the school has to offer. Extremely rigorous use of information on children's progress and achievement is quick to identify any area where children are not doing as well and take swift action to address this. Consequently, children made particularly good gains in their mathematical skills last year because of the school's highly effective promotion of calculating and problem solving in all areas of learning.
- Reading is promoted extremely well by all staff. Wherever you go there are books which children use and refer to in their learning, whether outside where children were creating habitats for dinosaurs, as part of an activity making their own African animals or on a display for Black History month. Children are very keen to share books with each other and their families at the start of the day. They quickly develop the skills of linking sounds and letters, using 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.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- School leaders continue to place a strong focus on teaching and learning and are not complacent about the importance of this aspect of their work. They have extremely high expectations of the quality of interactions and teaching of staff at all levels. This is one of the main reasons why the exceptionally high quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection.
- Teachers and other adults set high expectations and sessions contain an extensive variety of challenging activities and opportunities for children to be involved throughout because all staff have an excellent understanding of how young children learn. They are very skilled at engaging children's interests and plan a series of enjoyable, purposeful activities both indoors and outside that sustain children's interest.
- One example of this spanned the two days of the inspection and involved initially a group of children interested in dinosaurs. They built on their vocabulary as they were encouraged to 'stir', 'mix', 'scoop' and 'share' food for dinosaurs. They created a swamp for them to live in and then, to squeals of excitement, discovered some eggs in the mud. Books were used to see if these could belong to the dinosaurs and the children created their own pictures of what the hatching

dinosaurs might look like. The following day, the considerable interest continued as they watched a video of eggs hatching and they were able to crack eggs themselves and explore their contents. Their understanding of lifecycles developed rapidly as a result.

- All staff successfully encourage children to be independent and quickly develop high levels of confidence as their communication skills improve. Adults actively play alongside groups of children to model activities, engage children and move their learning forward extremely well. When children choose to work independently or with friends, adults provide encouragement or pose open questions that extend the learning even further and get them thinking more deeply.
- Checks on children's progress are extremely thorough, constantly carried out and regularly summarised in books recording children's learning in the Nursery. Findings are then discussed with families, when targets for improving progress are shared. Staff use the information they gather on progress exceptionally well to inform long-term planning of learning for each child, as well as to plan activities for the next day. Children themselves love to look back at their previous work and remember what they were learning, often pointing out how much more they know or can do now.
- Staff are acutely aware of each individual's learning and personal development priorities and tailor focused sessions and experiences both for the children and their families extremely effectively in response to these. Small groups of children each have a 'key worker' who takes responsibility for planning learning and recording how well they get on. They build up extremely close relationships with children and their families and regularly share details about children's progress as well as being there to support when needed. Parents and carers of disabled children and those with special educational needs are full of praise for the efforts of the staff. For example, one commented their child had 'made significant progress since his time here at the nursery' because 'everything is done to ensure they make progress'.

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

- Children's behaviour is exemplary. When working with an adult or playing independently they show considerable support for one another – regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. Staff deal very promptly with instances of unwanted or unkind behaviour; teaching children how to empathise with others and to resolve conflicts amicably. This helps to make the school very safe and welcoming.
- The parents, carers and staff agree that children's behaviour in and around school is excellent. Children's attendance levels are rising. The school and governors have been instrumental in successfully introducing tighter checks, stressing the importance of attendance on children's progress and running workshops for parents and carers. As a result, the Nursery has one of the highest attendance rates for a nursery in the borough. The breakfast club is extremely popular and has also had a positive impact on attendance.
- Because of the school's successful strong focus on children's health and well-being, children contribute extremely effectively to the school community. This is demonstrated well through their readiness to be involved in looking after the school building, as well as caring for their learning environment. For example, during the inspection children looked after the gardens, planting tulip bulbs and caring for the mini beasts they found as well as tidying up, wiping and sweeping up flour and other ingredients after they finished making vegetable patties.
- Children's understanding of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle is excellent and has been recognised in the Healthy Early Years and Walk to School awards. Not only are they aware of their own safety but also take care of younger children as they play and learn together. For example, as they walked up the stairs between floors a child who had been at the school a few weeks longer than another reminded him how to keep safe saying 'green up, orange down', referring to the arrows on the banisters.
- Through home visits and the very well attended 'Stay, Play and Learn' sessions the Nursery runs, strong links with families mean that children develop very trusting relationships with staff.

**The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The headteacher, governors and other leaders are passionate about their school and the children in it. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, supported extremely effectively by other leaders at all levels, has been highly successful in continuing to maintain and build on the previous outstanding practice. All leaders and staff work together with a clear vision, high expectations and commitment to continuous improvement.
- Leadership roles have evolved and strengthened and new roles created to ensure a secure future for the school. Staff responses were resoundingly positive and praising of the leadership, one commenting, 'I am extremely proud to be part of this amazing little community.'
- The school reviews all aspects of its work thoroughly and acts quickly to address any gaps so that no one becomes complacent and the drive to sustain the school's effectiveness is not slowed. School development plans are realistic and sharply focused. Plans to raise achievement are linked to close checks on the quality of teaching, learning and progress and these are shared by leaders and staff in the school.
- Provision for the training of all staff is excellent. All staff are encouraged to develop their skills, including moving on to becoming a qualified teacher as a result of the school's support and encouragement. As a result, school leaders are able to consistently focus on maintaining and improving the quality of teaching. The process of setting targets for teachers to improve their performance is rigorous and difficult conversations are not shied away from if necessary.
- The school prides itself in giving children opportunities to fulfil their potential and shine in areas where they may not have previously had any experience. These are provided through enriching experiences, such as visits to the theatre, museums, drumming sessions, swimming, ice skating, workshops with the Tate Modern, forest school and an opportunity to perform in an opera. This approach is exceedingly successful and valued extremely highly by children, parents and carers alike.
- The school forges extremely strong relationships with parents and carers while their children are in the Nursery. It provides an extensive range of support and training for families to better help with their children's education. In addition, it provides many opportunities for parents and carers to develop themselves, whether their computing skills or sessions in using public transport and the 'Boris Bikes'. Such initiatives have been recognised both locally and through a number of national awards it has received. As a result, parents and carers are highly supportive of the school commenting 'the nursery surpassed my expectations' and 'I feel privileged to have had my children here'.
- The local authority has supported the school very well at a 'light touch' level. The local authority recognises the quality of the school's work and increasingly uses it to share best practice with other early years providers. Leaders and staff are keen to develop this role having recently become mentors for the quality in extended services award as well as linking with a local school to support those training to become teachers and early years educators.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors share the headteacher's drive and aspirations for the school and children. Since the last inspection they have worked hard to develop their own skills and now have an excellent understanding of information on children's progress, and use the very latest available to check that all groups are doing as well as each other and that none is disadvantaged. Governors are committed to the continual enhancing of their own skills and becoming even more rigorous in the checks they make when visiting the school to check directly on key areas of the school's work. They ensure that financial resources are efficiently managed and know how this impacts on children's achievement. Governors see that targets to improve the performance of staff are reviewed carefully and that teachers' pay is linked to how well children are doing. They check that the breakfast club is well run and that safeguarding meets requirements.

## 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>	100882
<b>Local authority</b>	Tower Hamlets
<b>Inspection number</b>	425489

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>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	95
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Oliver Rice
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Lewis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17–18 November 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8980 4662
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