

Selhurst Early Years Centre

23 Dagnall Park, Selhurst, London, SE25 5PL

Inspection dates 14–15 November 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children make good progress from low starting points to leave the nursery with skills expected for their age in all areas of learning.
- There is a strong focus on developing a love of reading and children seek out opportunities to listen to stories and engage with books.
- Teachers take account of what children already understand and can do and adapt tasks accordingly, thereby moving children's learning forward.
- Planning takes account of the needs of children from different starting points well. This means the needs of pupils are well met, including more-able pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- Staff and parents say children are safe, and records, observations and discussions with children corroborate these views.
- Children show good levels of engagement in and attitudes towards learning. They are courteous and show care and consideration for each other and the learning environment.
- School leaders, including governors, have worked effectively to improve the quality of teaching so that achievement has risen since the previous inspection.
- The curriculum is broad and aspirational, with a range of ambitious, well-planned trips that enhance learning and deepen understanding in a range of areas.
- The school works well with a range of agencies to ensure children's needs are carefully met, especially those whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Children do not make the same amount of progress when they choose activities away from the direct guidance of an adult because the school does not promote the skills needed for independent learning as well as it does other skills.
- The new system for recording observations on pupils is not yet used to drive progress as effectively as possible because it does not involve parents in their child's learning and not all entries are of equally high quality.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven sessions of varying lengths encompassing a wide range of activities taught by teachers and early years educators, including the teaching of phonics (letter patterns and the sounds they make) and mathematics. Two of these were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of 28 questionnaires returned by staff.
- There were too few responses to the online Parent View survey for a report to be available. Views of parents were taken into account through looking at comments the school had collated and through informal discussions.
- The inspector looked at evidence of children's work so far this year in the observations staff have made of them and the 'special folders' where children keep pieces of work of their choosing.
- A range of documents were scrutinised, including minutes of the meetings of the governing body, the school's self-evaluation and development planning, documents relating to safeguarding and child protection, behaviour logs and attendance figures.

Inspection team

Jeanie Jovanova, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This nursery school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The school offers both full-time and part-time places which children can access as early as the term in which their third birthday falls. Children are able to opt for different combinations of sessions depending on what best suits them and their family circumstances.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs supported at early school action is higher than average, as is the proportion supported through early school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- A high proportion of children are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with the largest groups being Black Caribbean and Black African. A few children are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.
- The school shares the site with a children's centre managed by the governing body, which provides a range of facilities for younger children and families. These are subject to separate inspections.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Promote children's skills in accessing activities productively when away from direct adult guidance in order that they make equally good progress at these points of the day as they do when working with an adult.
- Ensure that the new system for checking and recording children's achievement and learning is used as effectively as possible to drive rapid progress by:
 - selecting a judicious combination of children's work and staff's observations to share regularly with parents
 - ensuring that all observations entered into the system are of equally high quality, using existing examples of best practice as reference points.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school with skill levels below those of typical three-year-olds in all areas of learning. They make good progress because staff plan carefully to meet their needs. This ensures that they are well prepared to move on to their Reception classes because by the time they leave, many have caught up and acquired the skills expected for their age.
- The school helps children develop a love of reading. They begin to learn some basic letter sounds and are confident talking about the stories they have heard.
- Children from different groups, including Black Caribbean and Black African, achieve equally well because the school is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity. Children who are at the early stage of learning English are supported in a range of ways so that they quickly begin to learn the words they need to make the most of the learning opportunities offered to them. For example, adults learn a few key words in children's home languages and visual signs are used regularly to support communication.
- Disabled children or those with special educational needs make equally good progress because the school quickly puts measures into place to involve all necessary agencies and services in meeting their needs.
- The needs of more-able children are also well met because teachers adapt activities with an appropriate level of challenge. For example, in an activity based on recognising numbers, the teacher quickly spotted that children were confident with numbers up to 10 so moved them on to bigger numbers, to squeals of delight.
- However, pupils do not make the same amount of progress when working on activities away from direct adult supervision because the skills they need to do so effectively have not been sufficiently well promoted.

The quality of teaching is good

- Staff work very closely together to provide a wide range of engaging activities using the indoor and outdoor spaces to maximum effect. They create a warm and welcoming atmosphere where children are happy to join in with the activities they lead.
- Adults ask careful questions which encourage children to explain what they already know. In this way, staff can be sure what is needed next to move children on to the next stage in their understanding.
- Phonics is well taught. From early skills of discriminating different sounds through to recognising individual letters and knowing the sounds they make, staff teach methodically and at a pace, which sustains children's interest well. For example, children were really enjoying listening to a musical instrument hidden behind a screen and having to pick out the one they think makes the same sound from a selection in front of them. They were delighted when the original one appeared and their choice matched. In a more advanced session, children were recognising and naming letters and drawing them in sand while making the sound they represent. These sessions are well paced and sustain children's interest so good learning takes place.
- Children's progress is checked regularly. Staff are very enthusiastic about a new, computer-based, system because it ensures they can capture the full extent of children's involvement in learning as it happens. The records produced provide teachers with important information with which to plan further learning to precisely meet children's needs. However, not all entries are of the same quality which means they do not all provide the same level of detail. Furthermore, leaders have not yet found a way to share them effectively with parents. This means opportunities are missed to include milestones achieved at home into learning planned in school, which sometimes limits children's progress from being outstanding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Children show very positive attitudes to taking part in activities which are well supported by adults. For example, children sustained high levels of concentration when exploring how modelling materials can be cut, shaped and squeezed through different receptacles.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because children are less confident when choosing tasks for themselves. This is because the skills they need to succeed without adult support have not been developed as well.
- Children and staff get on well because the school believes in fostering good relationships. This ensures children feel safe and are keen to come to school.
- The school places a great emphasis on courtesy and turn-taking. As a result, children show really good manners in their dealings with each other and members of staff. For example, in the well-organised breakfast club, children say 'please' and 'thank you' when they ask for things and put their own plates away tidily.
- Children understand the importance of being kind to each other and say that everyone is kind. They say that staff would sort things out if anyone did anything unkind.
- Children from different backgrounds play harmoniously together because equality is well promoted and discrimination tackled at every opportunity.
- The school ensures that all pupils are helped to develop good social skills and an understanding of how to behave well in different social situations. There is a strong focus on supporting children who have particular behavioural needs. This ensures that children are well prepared to move on to the next stage in their education.
- Children are given numerous opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe. Children heading off on a trip were able to explain about road safety, and children making cars in the woodwork area knew how to use hacksaws and other equipment with due care.
- The school promotes regular attendance well and makes clear how this benefits children's progress. There are robust procedures in place to follow up absence, especially for more vulnerable children.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders, including governors, are ambitious for the school and its community. They use robust performance management systems to ensure the quality of teaching continues to improve. Staff are set targets related to children's achievement and supported to meet these. This has seen attainment rise as more and more children now leave with the skills expected for their age.
- Leaders have an astute view of the school's strengths and prioritise well for continued development. The effectiveness of their plans is evidenced in the fact that attainment has risen since the previous inspection.
- The school works highly effectively with a range of other agencies, including staff at the children's centre that shares the same premises, in order to ensure that the community has the range of services it needs to support children and their families. Family support teams work with the most vulnerable families for the benefit not only of the individuals concerned but the whole community.
- The school leads a local collaboration of providers of early childcare by supporting staff in other settings to improve their practice.
- The breadth of the curriculum is a strong element of the school's provision. The range of trips on offer really enhances children's learning. For example, visiting Tate Modern and Tate Britain broadens their cultural horizons, Brixton and Tooting markets give them a flavour of how diverse London is and the annual trip to the Science Museum kindles their interest in technology. This ensures that children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted.

- Parents spoken to during the inspection were very positive about all the school has to offer. The school works in a range of ways to support families and to keep parents informed, and parents avail themselves of a range of services both from the school and its partners.
- The local authority knows this is a good school. It provides training and other services as requested and supports the work of the collaboration.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors ensure that the school meets safeguarding requirements. They attend relevant courses and briefings and are responsive to any issues brought before them in a quest to continually improve outcomes for children. Governors take their role in performance management seriously. They understand the links between children’s learning, quality of teaching and salary and share the expectation that staff meet their targets in order to move up the pay scale. They support measures to improve the quality of teaching and are aware of where underperformance was addressed in the past. They use information about children’s achievement to ask probing questions of senior leaders. Governors ensure that roles are allotted in a way that maximises the skills different members have, thereby creating an effective team. Governors liaise with other nursery schools to get an idea of how their performance compares.

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	131724
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	429652
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	Louise Bamford
Headteacher	Anita Mohindra
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 June 2011
Telephone number	020 8684 3777
Fax number	020 8664 8223
Email address	admin@scc.croydon.sch.uk

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