

# Vanessa Nursery School

Cathnor Road, London, W12 9JA

## Inspection dates

16–17 January 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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.

- Leadership is outstanding. Vanessa Nursery School remains outstanding because the headteacher and governors have a clear vision for the school and set high standards for early years practice.
- Children's achievement is outstanding. Children of all abilities and backgrounds settle quickly and make rapid gains in their learning and development. They leave the nursery demonstrating skills and abilities above those typical for four year olds.
- Children are viewed as unique individuals and staff are consistently supported in developing and refining their skills in understanding about how young children learn. Morale is high.
- The support and guidance for disabled children and those who have special educational needs and their families are strong. This is highly valued by parents and carers.
- Teaching is outstanding because adults continuously share information about and carefully plan for children's needs, interests and achievements. This ensures that children make rapid gains in their learning.
- The emphasis on developing safe and trusting relationships between children, teachers and families helps children starting school to settle quickly and securely.
- Children are keen to come to school and return to their activities with enthusiasm. The carefully organised environment and focus on relationships result in excellent behaviour, regular attendance and contribute strongly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The governing body knows the work of the school extremely well. The governors provide an effective balance of support and challenge that has not only helped maintain high standards, but looks for further improvement.
- Parents and carers are quite rightly proud of the school and the way in which it helps their children to develop the confidence and the skills they need to achieve well in their next school. 'The staff really know my child and see each child as unique.'

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight sessions of varying length across all areas of children’s learning taught by teachers, staff trained in early years education and teaching assistants. Five of these observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- Children were observed working with adults, in groups and independently.
- The inspector looked at children’s work and observations made by adults in children’s records of learning and observed meetings where children’s learning was discussed and planned for.
- Discussions were held with governors and a representative of the local authority.
- A range of documents was scrutinised, including the school’s plans for improvement, safeguarding, child protection, behaviour, attendance, minutes of meetings, governors’ reports and information about how well children achieve.
- The inspector took into account the 23 responses to the online Parent View survey, the school’s own survey and spoke with many parents and carers across the two days.

## Inspection team

Narinder Dohel, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized nursery school. The school offers both full-time and part-time places. Children attend between three and five terms, starting either in September or January.
- A very small proportion of children are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportions of disabled children and those who have special educational needs supported through early action, early action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are higher than average.
- A high proportion of children are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, the single largest group, approximately one third, being White British.
- Approximately one third of children are learning to speak English as an additional language, many of whom are at the early stages of learning English when they start school.
- The headteacher has recently become the head of the local children's centre and also provides support to other schools locally and beyond.

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

- Ensure that all staff are equally skilled at extending children's skills of creative thinking and problem solving across all areas of learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Most children join the school with a range of skills and capabilities that are considerably lower than levels typically expected of children their age. An increasing number of children have complex learning needs, mostly in relation to speech and language.
- Effective teaching and a thoughtful learning environment ensure that children from all backgrounds and abilities, including those who have special educational needs and those who are more able, are guided to make rapid progress. Consequently children leave school having made outstanding progress and are well equipped for the next stage in their learning.
- Staff work closely with parents and carers and each other to gather and exchange information and share their expectations for children's learning and development. This starts before children join the school and continues throughout their time in the school. This ensures that children settle quickly and enables adults to plan opportunities that develop the needs and interests of children. This results in rapid gains across all areas of learning and most notably in children's personal, social and emotional development.
- Children develop their reading skills well. An appropriate range of high-quality story and information books can be found in all areas of the school including the outside areas. Many children have favourite stories which they ask adults to read, choose to take home or share with friends. Songs, rhymes and stories are used to develop children's knowledge about letters and the sounds they make. Some children were observed blending sounds and identifying objects that start with that sound. These activities also ensure that children at an early stage of learning English acquire skills and knowledge quickly and appropriately.
- There are exciting and excellent opportunities for children to develop their early skills of mathematics through creative and imaginative play. A group of children used a blackboard to create a tally of goals scored in a game of football, while other children used a range of stones and pine cones to sort, order by size and develop their knowledge of counting and matching numbers to objects and another group estimated which objects might sink or float during their lesson in the school swimming pool.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs also make rapid gains in their learning. This is because they are extremely well supported and parents and carers are involved in developing and reviewing learning plans.
- The indoor and outdoor areas provide excellent opportunities for children to extend their social, physical and imaginative skills and understanding of the world. Children were observed moving to music in the outdoor music area, using dressing up clothes to become action characters and using hand held computer devices and reference books and magnifiers for finding out about worms and dinosaurs.
- Parents and carers are extremely happy with the progress their children make and agree that their children's needs and interests are met well.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- Outstanding teaching has been maintained since the previous inspection because of the emphasis on sharing and developing expertise, revisions to how children are assessed and a continued priority on high-quality interactions with children and their families.
- Staff have high expectations of what children can achieve. Each member of staff is responsible for a group of children, maintaining learning records and planning learning experiences that show how well the children get on. Daily reviews enable staff to agree on next steps for children's learning.
- The environment indoors and outdoors has been designed to promote children's learning in more than one area of development whatever activity they are engaged in. It is effectively organised to ensure that every area provides children with interesting, high-quality and

accessible resources that reflect and stimulate their interests. The well-designed outdoor area provides areas for digging, sliding, climbing, looking for mini-beasts, gardening, small quiet areas and areas for exploring music and stories.

- The development of early reading, writing and mathematics is threaded through the provision across the nursery. Books and a range of writing implements can be found in all parts of the nursery. Direct teaching of mathematical practices such as weighing materials and using scales and balances gives children the confidence to explore further for themselves.
- Staff encourage children to develop high levels of communication and social skills, and the confidence to make choices. They do this by providing models of language and learning alongside children. This is particularly helpful to those who are just starting to learn English, enabling them to become increasingly confident conversationalists. Most adults extend children's skills, knowledge and the ability to think about and solve problems such as how they might closely observe the markings and movements of a worm, or find out what dinosaurs eat. However, these opportunities are not regularly identified by all staff and sometimes adults provide children with solutions too quickly.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs achieve well because staff ensure that they quickly develop an understanding about their specific needs and take an individualised approach to planning. There were many examples of how children with physical or learning needs are planned for to ensure that they can work alongside others through the use of specialised equipment, signs, symbols and routines that settle and engage the children.
- Staff build a close relationship with parents and carers and exchange information and ideas about children's learning and how their children can be supported. Families, many of whom are from minority ethnic groups, are encouraged to support their children at home by sharing the books that children bring home with them.

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

- The behaviour of children is outstanding. Their attitudes to learning are exemplary.
- Children enjoy coming to school. They look forward to resuming their activities and seeing their friends and teachers. They concentrate for long periods of time in their chosen activity by themselves, with other children and with adults.
- Parents and carers, governors and staff rightly agree that children's behaviour is excellent in school and on trips and visits.
- Children with social, emotional, behavioural or special educational needs are skilfully supported in taking a full part in all the nursery has to offer. Space, resources and activities are designed to ensure that the needs of all children are being met. Picture cards are used to help children make choices and express their likes and dislikes.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. There is a great emphasis on settling children and helping them to play together and share. Adults quickly and gently talk to children showing and explaining how to solve conflicts appropriately. This results in safe and trusting relationships between children and between children and adults.
- Not only does the school meet statutory requirements for safeguarding but also undertakes additional checks and training which provide greater detail about the school's work in this area. Risk assessments for activities in and around as well as beyond the school are undertaken regularly and rigorously.
- Children are helped to develop their understanding of health, safety and well-being. They know about washing hands before and after mealtimes or snack times, showering before and after swimming and how to care for the small creatures they look for and study outdoors.
- Children really enjoy coming to school. Regular attendance has been maintained in recent years.

**The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The vision and ambition of the headteacher and governors are shared by all members of staff. They are passionate about children as individuals and this is at the heart of the improvements made by the headteacher and staff. This has resulted in continued outstanding outcomes for children and outstanding teaching. The headteacher and governors have started sharing their expertise and approach with colleagues in other schools locally and more widely.
- Staff have welcomed the introduction of a clear, meaningful and robust system for developing their teaching and leadership skills to ensure that teaching is ambitious and outcomes for children are outstanding. This system of managing performance and professional development is linked closely to the school's priorities and shared with governors.
- Staff are helped to access and achieve a range of further training and professional qualifications in how young children learn as well as developing their leadership skills. As a result more staff are becoming adept at identifying opportunities for and extending children's creative thinking and problem-solving skills. Morale is high and contributes strongly to the outstanding practice across the nursery.
- The school's own evaluation of its work and plans for further improvement demonstrate that leaders accurately assess the strengths of the nursery.
- Parents and carers highly praise the work of the school and the opportunities such as workshops, which the school provides for families to help their children learn, as well as the support and guidance for children with special educational needs. They are extremely positive that their children are happy, seen as unique individuals and make outstanding progress.
- Children thoroughly enjoy their learning. The curriculum provides excellent opportunities that underpin all aspects of children's development exceptionally well. These opportunities improve children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school consistently promotes equality of opportunity, fosters good relationships and tackles discrimination. Children have an excellent understanding of the needs and choices of others.
- The local authority provides 'light touch' support as it considers the school to be a leader of exemplary practice. The headteacher is already working with other schools to develop best practice locally and more widely.
- Safeguarding practices are secure.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is exemplary. Governors bring a wealth of experience to the work of the school in the areas of early years education, safeguarding and finance. They regularly spend time in the school getting to know the children, staff and families. These visits result in insightful and relevant comments and recommendations about what is working well and any improvements required. Governors have high expectations for children and ask about how well different groups of children achieve. They support the headteacher in working with early years experts to keep abreast of current thinking, and developments to ensure the quality of provision, teaching and outcomes for children are continuously improving. Governors contribute well to monitoring objectives in the school development plan. They seek training to ensure that they are up to date with guidance when managing the performance of their headteacher and are informed about the quality of teaching and objectives set for staff. They have policies that make clear how the work of staff is recognised and underperformance addressed. Governors ensure that safeguarding requirements are thoroughly met.

## 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>	100316
<b>Local authority</b>	Hammersmith and Fulham
<b>Inspection number</b>	430824

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>	70
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Emily Keeler
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michele Barrett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9-10 May 2011
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