

The Grove Nursery School

Tower Mill Road, Camberwell, London, SE15 6BP

Inspection dates

2–3 December 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children are looked after well. The school is friendly and inclusive.
- There are good links between school and home. The school successfully supports families in need. Most parents are very happy with the school.
- Leaders check children's progress carefully. Ways of doing this have improved. As a result, children learn well.
- There is good teamwork between leaders and staff.
- Governors provide effective support. They share in making sure that children learn well and that the teaching is good.
- Leaders understand their school and are realistic about what needs to be done to make it outstanding. Their plans cover the right priorities. The school is improving.
- Children behave well and get on well together.
- The school keeps children safe. The adults think ahead to plan for possible risks.
- Children settle quickly because they feel safe, secure and protected.
- Lunchtime is important in teaching children to have good manners. Lunches and snacks are healthy.
- Leaders promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Activities, particularly those indoors, encourage children to learn a variety of topics and to develop good language and number skills.
- The outdoor play areas are spacious. They are used well for promoting children's physical skills.
- Teaching is consistently good because leaders regularly check how well teachers are teaching. They provide effective advice when needed.
- Children are effectively taught to recognise sounds and letters (phonics).
- Much teaching is through music and song, and this brings children together through enjoyment.
- Children achieve well because their individual needs are successfully met.
- Disabled children and those with a range of special educational needs do well in their learning. The school is quick to identify their needs, if not already diagnosed. Experts are on hand to provide swift and timely support for the children.
- Children are prepared well for moving to their next school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Questioning does not always challenge children to think for themselves and to give full answers.
- Outdoor activities do not always give children the chance to explore a wide range of topics to develop their skills to the full.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector looked at the children's learning in the indoor and outdoor play areas together with the headteacher and her deputy. She also observed the children eating lunch, tidying up, and taking part in group sessions to prepare them for learning sounds and letters.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. The inspector met a representative from the local authority. She also met the Chair and Vice-Chair of Governors.
- The inspector took account of the 12 responses to a questionnaire from members of staff.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents during the inspection. She also took account of the school's survey of parents' views.
- There were four responses to Parent View, the online survey of the views of parents. The number of responses was too low for the results to be published on the Parent View website.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents. These included the school's own views of how well it is doing, its plans for the future and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- The inspector also looked at information on the children's attainment and progress. She examined safeguarding information and records relating to behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Natalia Power, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Grove Nursery School is average in size for a nursery school.
- Nursery schools are not eligible for the additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils. However, around two thirds of the children are eligible for free school meals. This proportion is higher than typical for nursery schools.
- Almost all children come from minority ethnic heritages. This proportion is much higher than average. Children come from a wide range of backgrounds, with Black African being the largest group.
- Around one in five children speaks English as an additional language, which is average.
- The proportion of disabled children and those who have special educational needs is around half, which is above average.
- Two thirds of children stay all day and have lunch at the Nursery. The others attend either in the morning or in the afternoon sessions.
- The school is part of a children's centre. This is subject to separate inspection, and the report can be found on www.ofsted.gov.uk. The school's headteacher also manages the children's centre.
- There is additional on-site provision for children under the age of three. This provision is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all adults ask the children challenging questions that encourage them to think fully about topics and use complete sentences.
- Ensure that activities in the outdoor play areas give children the chance to learn a wide range of language, number and science skills.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership of the school is good. Leaders and governors work well together to make sure that teaching is consistently good and that children's behaviour is well managed.
- There is a real team feeling in the school. The headteacher and deputy headteacher share their responsibilities effectively. There are no middle leaders on the small staff, but teachers and support staff work well together. The wholly positive responses to the staff questionnaire show that staff form a loyal team. Arrangements for setting targets for staff are well established, and linked to children's progress.
- Teaching is consistently good because leaders are out and about, regularly checking how well teachers are teaching. They provide helpful advice when needed.
- Leaders give teachers and support workers opportunities to take advantage of useful training. This ensures that they are skilled in helping children with a range of additional needs learn as well as other pupils.
- A strength of the leadership is the way it supports families who are most in need. Leaders are able to do this efficiently through the close links with the children's centre that shares the same building. There are close links between school and home.
- Leaders work in close partnership with a range of specialists, including speech and language therapists and an expert in supporting the visually impaired. This helps children with a range of additional needs to get the help they need when they need it. Such care shows the school's strong commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all the children.
- The school has not stood still since the previous inspection. Ways of checking children's progress have improved. The observations that staff make of the children's learning are now matched to how well children of their age typically do. This makes it much easier than before to see where children are in danger of falling behind. As a result, children are making good progress in their learning.
- The school is well placed to continue to improve. Leaders know the school's strengths and areas for development. They are ambitious to make it outstanding. Their plans cover the right priorities. Plans are clear about how improvements will be made, who will be responsible for making them, and how long they will take.
- The local authority provides effective support. Representatives know the school well. They visit the school regularly to make sure that teaching is good and that children are safe.
- The topics that children learn are wide ranging. Activities give them a good grounding in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly in the indoor play areas. The outdoor play areas are used well for the development of physical skills. However, they do not enable children to learn a wide enough range of skills, such as those gained through simple science activities, or reading, writing and using numbers out of doors.
- Leaders know that the community's inner city location means that many children do not have ready access to woods and fields. They bring nature into the school as much as possible, giving the children plenty of chances to dig, handle animals and get muddy.
- Leaders and governors make sure that children are prepared well for life in modern democratic Britain. They ensure that there is no discrimination against anyone, and that all members of the school's diverse community get on well together. Members of the community come together to share their national dishes on International Day. Children visit places of worship, such as mosques, to help them understand the values and cultures of others. In this way, leaders foster good relationships and the school is a peaceful community.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide effective support to the school. They are closely involved in its activities. They visit regularly to see its work for themselves. As a result, they know about the quality of teaching and how well the children are learning.
 - Although there are no nationally agreed figures on nursery children's progress, governors know how well Grove children are doing against how well children typically do. This helps them ensure the children learn well. Governors work closely with children with a range of special educational needs to make sure that they too learn well.
 - Governors make sure that they get good value for money from the staff they employ. They focus on getting the right staff in the first place, and then set them clear targets to ensure that pay is closely linked to performance.
 - Governors are effective in keeping the children safe. They are well trained in safeguarding, including the

safer recruitment of staff. They visit the school to make sure the site is safe and secure.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They get on well together. Children are able to share the toys and craft materials, and to take turns on the equipment. During group activities they mostly sit quietly and listen to one another and to the adults.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because occasionally children have squabbles, particularly in the outdoor areas. This is because they are sometimes not sufficiently engaged in their learning because the activities do not always hold their interest.
- Adults successfully manage the behaviour of the small number of children whose special needs include behavioural difficulties. They give them the right level of attention, whilst ensuring that other children are not overlooked.
- Children who have trouble settling and feel homesick are catered for well. The school makes good use of 'attachment boxes', which contain memorabilia from home, to soothe the children and help them return quickly to their activities.
- Children are looked after well in the school's friendly and inclusive environment. They feel secure and protected. Parents and carers agree that the school keeps their children safe and happy. Attendance is rising, and this reflects parents' contentment with the school.
- Snack times are used well to encourage the children to acquire skills such as buttering toast, cutting it up safely and offering it to others. This helps them to take responsibility for others.
- Children who stay for lunch enjoy the healthy food which sets them up well for the afternoon's activities. They eat at family-style tables, each group with an adult who shows them how to behave. Adults make sure that children use knives and forks correctly and have good manners.
- Leaders promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Many activities encourage them to think about the world around them and to use their imagination. For example, they learn to be tender in handling the school's guinea pigs, and to think about the needs of the animals.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Children who have dietary or medical needs are carefully watched. Information about their conditions is available to all those who are likely to need it.
- Leaders check before children are taken out of school that any risks have been considered.
- Any knocks or bruises are immediately reported to parents, and orderly records are kept.
- Staff are properly trained in safety procedures. Adults who work with children are carefully checked. Mobile phones are not allowed in the school. Fire drills are carried out regularly.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good. The two class teachers manage the work of their support staff effectively to ensure children are occupied and learn well.
- Adults use music and song to bring children together. This contributes to the school's community feel. Singing also helps the children to acquire a good sense of rhythm and to improve their physical skills as they match actions to words.
- Adults understand the need to promote children's speaking and listening skills. They engage children in conversation and explain tasks carefully. Occasionally, adults do not ask challenging enough questions designed to encourage children to think about the answers and use full sentences.
- Children are surrounded by plenty of books and quiet reading corners in which adults and children can often be seen curled up with a book. This promotes children's reading habits and skills well.
- A variety of tasks promote children's literacy skills. Children are successfully taught to match sounds and letters to help them begin to learn to read and write.
- Number skills are taught effectively through a range of activities. For example, children learn to recognise basic shapes, such as rectangles and triangles. They do this by making them out of playdough, fixing elastic bands on pegboards, and drawing the shapes. One child held up a drawing and said proudly, 'I wrote a triangle.'
- The adults check children's progress carefully, recording their findings on paper, on computer tablets and

in photographs. These records are saved in children's 'learning journey' books, and provide a useful link between school and home.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children learn well because the range of inviting activities helps them develop good skills in reading, writing and understanding simple mathematics.
- The school carefully checks the progress of groups to make sure that all children make good progress in their learning. School figures show that those from Black African heritages do as well as the others.
- School figures show that children eligible to receive free school meals also do well in their learning.
- This is also the case for disabled children and those with special educational needs. Often it is the school that acts quickly to diagnose their needs and set up support for them. These children receive effective support, either from one-to-one support staff or through the expert involvement of a range of visiting therapists.
- Children who are at an early stage of learning English do well because their needs are identified early. Adults use pictures and visual symbols to help them settle in quickly and confidently. They make a good start in learning English.
- Adults know who the most able pupils are, and make sure that the tasks they are given have a good level of challenge. More is expected of these children and, in turn, they rise to the challenge and make good progress in acquiring skills.
- The children arrive at the school with varied skills and pre-school experiences. Broadly, their skills on arrival are below those typical for their age. By the time they leave, their skills are broadly typical for their age, and this represents good progress. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stage of schooling and learning.
- Leaders go to great lengths to make sure children are ready for school through home visits. When the time comes for them to leave, the school invites their next teachers to visit and takes the children to visit their next school. In this way, children are well prepared for the move and approach it confidently.

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	100771
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	447893

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	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Smart
Headteacher	Kay Beckwith
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2012
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