

Rowland Hill Nursery School

White Hart Lane, London, N17 7LT

Inspection dates 16–17 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- This is a happy school where children enjoy learning. It is popular with staff and parents and carers. Children are cared for very well.
- Leaders and governors have consistently improved the quality of teaching. As a result, children's achievement is now good and they are prepared well for the next phase of schooling.
- Teachers and support staff create many purposeful learning opportunities to excite and engage children's interests. As a result, children are very keen and eager to learn.
- From their individual starting points, all groups of children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve well.
- Children are kept safe and are taught how to keep themselves safe. The site is secure and adults are rigorously checked.
- Children's behaviour has improved since the previous inspection and is now good.
- Adults focus strongly on children sharing and taking turns. As a result, children play well together and are considerate and kind to others.
- The range of activities provided for children is wide and stimulating and helps them learn well. The outdoor play area is used particularly successfully to stimulate children's imaginations.
- Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted, ensuring that from an early age they are becoming prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Parents value the school's contribution to their lives. They are kept very well informed about their children's progress. The school is highly regarded and trusted to do the best for each child.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Adults do not always expect enough from children, especially from those that learn at a faster rate.
- The use of questions does not always give children the chance to develop their language and thinking skills to the full.
- At times, staff provide children with an answer or a solution to a problem without giving them sufficient opportunity to think about their response to a question posed.
- Targets set out in the school development plan are not easily measurable to show how well the school is doing in bringing about improvement.
- The new system for assessing and recording children's attainment and progress is not yet embedded so that it more effectively supports the highest quality planning for children to make rapid progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed children’s learning in a wide range of sessions and activities indoors and outdoors in the nursery. Five of these were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted’s online Parent View questionnaire for information to be used for this inspection. However, the inspector was able to meet parents at the nursery and took account of a written communication from one parent and the school’s own surveys. She also considered the views of staff expressed in 15 responses to the inspection questionnaire.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and her staff, children and representatives from the local authority’s advisory service and members of the governing body.
- The inspector examined information on children’s’ achievement, including their electronic ‘learning journals’. She also evaluated a range of other school documentation, including the documents relating to safeguarding, the school’s improvement plan, the document that records the school’s view of its performance and minutes of governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Barbara Firth, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an above average-sized nursery school. The majority of children attend on a part-time basis, either morning or afternoon. The local authority funds 17 places for the most vulnerable children.
- Children join the nursery school at three points during each year, at the start of the term after their third birthday.
- An above average proportion of children come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds and approximately half of the children speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- The setting is a fully integrated nursery school, day-care facility and children's centre all of which are managed by the headteacher and the governing body. The children's centre and day-care provision were not part of this inspection.
- The school is part of the Haringey Nursery School for Training and Development Consortium. Together with two other nursery schools in the local authority it offers early years training for the early years workforce. The headteacher takes a leading role in leadership and management training.
- Since the previous inspection, there has been a high turnover of staff. The leadership team has been extended and strengthened to include two assistant headteachers and a part-time special educational needs coordinator. The governing body has reconstituted and has been joined by several new members.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and children's achievement from good to outstanding by ensuring that:
 - staff have consistently high expectations, especially for those children who learn at a faster rate
 - questioning is consistently used to deepen children's understanding
 - staff give children time to think and respond after posing a question
 - children are encouraged to use as much language as possible in their replies.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that targets set out in the school development plan are measurable to show how well the school is doing in bringing about further improvements
 - embedding the improved assessment system so that it more effectively supports planning for children to make rapid progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and governors work in effective partnership and are fully supported by the whole staff. Strong leadership has resulted in improving the quality of teaching. As a result, children learn well and are prepared effectively for the next phase of schooling.
- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection because leaders check the adults' work regularly and provide valuable advice on how to improve. Lesson observations are based firmly on how much children are learning and how well they achieve. Teachers are informed very clearly about how their performance is measured and that it is linked to pay awards.
- Leaders have improved ways of checking children's progress in their learning. These new systems show clearly the level of children's skills at the start of school and how well they progress over time. The systems are beginning to enable leaders to identify in a timely manner any child who, regardless of ability, could be making better progress and to put in place appropriate support. As yet, the systems are not fully embedded or developed.
- All staff share in checking children's progress. They can see clearly how well the children are doing. The information identifies how well groups are learning and ensures that appropriate support can be put in place if a group falls behind.
- Leaders and governors understand their school and accurately judge its strengths and remaining areas for improvement. Their plans for the future of the school cover detailed priorities to secure continued improvement. However, how success will be measured is not always clear enough in order to show how the school is improving.
- Leaders and middle leaders effectively manage important areas of the school's work. They manage provision effectively for children who have a range of additional needs. The work that the school does to support and engage parents is extensive and managed very well.
- The local authority has provided medium-touch support since the previous inspection. It has been particularly useful in helping leaders to evaluate and improve the quality of teaching.
- The school has not yet received the early years pupil premium. However, leaders and governors have drawn up a clear plan for its use, focusing on improving children's language and communication skills, including through working with a film-maker and music specialist.
- Parents who spoke to the inspector were very happy with the school. Typical comments were: 'I can't praise it enough' and 'Communication is fantastic.' A parent who wrote to the inspector said, 'My daughter can't wait to go to nursery every day and is beaming with happiness and excitement when I collect her.' Parents reported that the school keeps their children safe and happy. They know how well their children are doing and appreciate very much the wide range of workshops which helps them to understand better how their children are learning. They confirm that the school listens to any concerns they may have and deals with these quickly and effectively.
- Leaders have created a culture in which children feel safe and secure, and in which good relations are fostered and they behave well. Children from all heritages and backgrounds get on well together. There is no bullying or discrimination against anyone. Each child has an equal opportunity to succeed.
- The school provides a wide variety of stimulating activities for the children and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very strongly. The outside and indoor areas are used effectively to develop all areas of learning. The activities stimulate children's creative development and provide good opportunities to develop their physical side.
- The school prepares children well for growing up in modern Britain. Children learn about different cultures and religions. Children learn to celebrate diversity and individuality through their annual international day and the wide range of opportunities for the children's families to contribute to their child's learning experience.
- All elements of safeguarding are checked to make sure they comply with requirements and are effective.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is effective and committed to getting the best for each child. Governors strengthen the leadership team through the wide range of skills which they bring to the school. They are well trained and have a good understanding of data. They provide an appropriate level of support and challenge.
 - Governors set clear targets for senior staff to ensure that the school continues to improve. They support staff training and ensure it benefits the school. Through their regular and focused visits, they keep a watchful eye on the quality of teaching so that good teaching is appropriately rewarded and any

underperformance is quickly tackled. In these ways, governors ensure that the school gets good value from its staff.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Parents who spoke to the inspector agree that behaviour is good. Children learn to respect each other's right to join in all activities and benefit from a consistent approach to promoting good behaviour.
- Children have positive attitudes to learning. They are invariably ready to try new activities. They take turns and share the equipment. For example, children in the outdoor area cooperated enthusiastically in the mud kitchen to make 'soup'.
- Lunchtimes are organised well. Children sit at family-style tables, together with adults, and enjoy a healthy and balanced lunch. Adults take care to teach children good manners. Children are encouraged to be independent, collecting their own cutlery, serving themselves from the serving dishes and clearing up afterwards.
- Staff offer much help and advice to families about bringing their child to nursery regularly. Their support in doing so, coupled with the high levels of enjoyment evident among all children for their learning, are key reasons why a very large majority attend regularly.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Governors and leaders check that the site is secure, and that all risks have been thought about in advance of trips and visits. School records show that any accidents are carefully recorded and discussed with parents.
- Those in charge of protecting children clearly understand the procedures they need to follow if any incident occurs. They make sure that any allegations or disclosures a child might make are properly and speedily referred to the right authorities. Leaders and governors make sure that those who work with children are rigorously checked.
- As well as keeping them safe, the school encourages children to be independent. There are plenty of opportunities for them to feel they are being trusted with their own safety, for instance riding the scooters on a track or balancing on stilts. Children are also encouraged to use real tools such as screwdrivers and pliers when making sculptures, under the watchful eye of an adult. Sun safety is promoted well and all children wear a hat when it is required in the outdoor area.

The quality of teaching is good

- Staff are deployed effectively, have high expectations of the children and a good understanding of the principles of early years education. They also understand that children learn in different ways. This leads to teaching that is consistently good. There is a good balance of focused activities where children work in small groups with their key person or engage in their self-chosen activities.
- Small-group focused sessions are used well to develop children's mathematical skills. For example, they confidently count to 10, identify numbers randomly on a number line and are beginning to use a number square to count beyond 10.
- Children love reading and eagerly listen to stories in 'Talking Time'. When reading independently, they hold books carefully and turn the pages correctly. Parents are encouraged to choose and borrow books for their children to read at home from the well-stocked library. Workshops to develop how parents can support their children's early reading skills are very popular.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is effective. These skills are taught to those children who are ready to learn to read. Children were observed eagerly sounding out letters accompanied by actions which help them to get it right. The majority of children in the group demonstrated that with support, they could form the letter on their whiteboard correctly. However, the challenge for those children who could do this task easily and quickly was not high enough and consequently their achievement was not as good.
- The nursery is a calm and friendly place to learn. Some skilled staff use questioning very well to enhance and deepen children's understanding of particular concepts. They are also adept at allowing children time to critically think and use language well to formulate a response after asking a question. However, this is

not consistent across the nursery.

- A good range of mark-making materials is available, both indoors and outside, to help children develop their writing skills. For example, children write shopping lists in the 'mud kitchen' or hair appointments in the 'hair dressing salon'. However, sometimes activities do not sufficiently stretch the most able writers.
- Teachers and other adults provide disabled children and those who have special educational needs with good support and staff often share methods with parents so that they can continue a particular approach at home.
- The staff promote children's personal, social and emotional development extremely well. They ensure that children grow quickly in confidence and respect the need for them to be allowed to make decisions for themselves.
- Children's achievements are tracked and recorded electronically. These 'learning journals' are informative about an individual child's progress and achievement. They are shared with parents on a regular basis. The school is working towards ensuring that parents can contribute their own observations of their child's learning journey electronically. Staff also share these books with children, allowing them to reflect on and revisit previous learning.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Many children come into the nursery with skills and knowledge at levels below those typical for their age. They make good progress and it is particularly strong in physical and personal and emotional development. Most children leave the school with skills typical for their age and an increasing proportion exceed these. As a result, children are well prepared for starting in a Reception class.
- From the start, staff place great emphasis on developing children's physical, personal, social and emotional skills. During the inspection, children were observed pouring drinks and washing out paint palettes. Others were handling small tools, such as scissors, screw drivers and glue guns, with good control. They were also observed being involved in more robust activity outdoors, balancing and riding small-wheeled toys.
- Children make good progress in developing literacy and numeracy skills. The inspector observed that a large proportion of children were confident in recognising letters, writing their name and understanding numbers and shapes.
- Children with special educational needs enter with skills at levels significantly below those typical for their age. As a result of timely and effective intervention and close partnership working with outside agencies, such as health colleagues and speech and language therapists, this group of children make at least good progress and achieve well in relation to their starting points.
- Approximately half of the children who attend the nursery school have English as an additional language. To support these children, staff work in close partnership with parents and provide additional resources, such as dual language books which are shared with parents. As a result, these children soon settle into school life and make good progress.
- The most able children achieve as well as their peers. However, sometimes expectations are not high enough for those children who learn at a faster rate. Teachers do not ensure that these children achieve their full potential by moving them on swiftly to the next stage in their learning or ensuring they persevere when a task becomes difficult.
- Analysis of children's work shows that over time they make good progress in their learning. Parents agree with this judgement.
- The school has effective transition arrangements with a range of local schools to which the children transfer. Teachers visit the children and information about each child is transferred to make transition smooth. The nursery has a role play corner which is set up as a primary classroom. Children can dress up in the various uniforms from the primary schools, take the register and look at books which the schools have prepared showing them what the schools will be like. As a result, children move confidently to their next phase in education.

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	102072
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	462159

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	121
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Zena Brabazon
Headteacher	Julie Vaggers
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 July 2013
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