

Dulwich Wood Nursery School

Lyall Avenue, Dulwich, London SE21 8QS

Inspection dates	10–11 May 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Good leadership and management, including by governors, is ensuring that the school is improving rapidly.
- Leaders and managers want the best for the children and are striving for excellence.
- Systems for checking and managing the performance of teachers are rigorous and, as a result, leaders are having a positive impact on improving teaching and the children's outcomes.
- The knowledgeable assistant headteacher provides strong day-to-day leadership and management for the school.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Teachers provide many stimulating activities that help children to enjoy learning.
- Members of staff are supportive and caring, enabling children to gain independence and to learn quickly.
- There is good information showing how well three- and four-year-olds are learning.
- The school provides children with good care and support in their personal development and welfare.
- Members of staff keep the children safe and healthy. They are vigilant in checking that children are working in safe conditions.
- Children feel safe and know that they can rely on members of staff to help them when necessary. They behave well and are keen to try new activities.
- Children of all abilities and backgrounds make good progress from their differing starting points. They do especially well in listening and in gaining self-confidence.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all activities are sufficiently inviting or provide enough challenge to extend the knowledge and understanding of the most-able children, especially in reading and writing.
- The information kept on how well the two-year-olds are doing is sometimes too vague. It does not always help members of staff to plan the children's next steps so that they build on what they already know and can do.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that activities are consistently interesting and extend the learning of the most-able children, especially in reading and writing.
- Make sure that the information kept on how well the two-year-olds are learning helps members of staff to provide work that builds on what the children already know and can do.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders and managers are clear about what works well and what needs to be done next to move the school from being good to outstanding. There is a shared focus on raising attainment and improving the children's progress.
- The executive headteacher and assistant headteacher check teaching and learning rigorously and ensure that members of staff improve their performance. There is a close link between how well the children are doing and the targets set for the members of staff. Training is frequent and specific to the needs of each key worker.
- The local authority has provided effective support, enabling the school to improve rapidly. The level of support has been reduced since the previous inspection because school leaders are showing the capacity to improve independently.
- The special funding to help support disadvantaged children is spent wisely on enhancing staffing, and these children do as well as the other children.
- The curriculum provides a breadth of topics to support good learning. Children are involved in deciding what they are going to learn next and enjoy the many additional opportunities to learn from visitors and during visits. All members of staff are committed to improving provision and work well as a team to plan a wide range of interesting activities.
- Children learn about British values by learning good manners and show their respect for others by listening to their views and ideas. Leaders are strengthening the curriculum so that it consistently provides the right activities to extend the knowledge and understanding of the most-able children in reading and writing.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. During the inspection, children demonstrated their delight in nature when jumping in and out of the large puddle that formed on the outdoor play area, and others enjoyed playing African drums. The 'International Day' was appreciated by the children and their parents. One parent said, 'It made you feel as if you were somewhere else.'
- Parents have good opportunities to become involved in their children's learning. For example, they are encouraged to borrow cameras to record any learning that takes place at home. They are pleased with the work of the school. One parent spoke for others by saying, 'My son comes out of school happy and glowing. He has learned so much.'
- Leaders are aware that some of the information kept on how well the two-year-olds are learning is not as rigorous as it should be and does not match the good quality of records kept for the three- and four-year-olds.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The effective governing body provides the right level of challenge and support for the school leaders.
 - Governors are knowledgeable about the work of the school and know what remains to be done to improve it further.
 - They make frequent checks on how well the children are doing so that they can ensure that all children are doing equally well.
 - New governors are strengthening their roles well through training.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders check that staff are suitable for working with small children and ensure that training is kept up to date. Parents are given the opportunity to attend training to help reduce accidents in the home. Members of staff check all areas of the nursery at the start of each session to ensure that risks to the children are minimised.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Members of staff maintain a calm and welcoming working atmosphere enabling children to settle quickly and to establish good routines for learning.
- Exciting activities indoors and outside engage the children's interest and, as a result, they persevere with their tasks and concentrate well.

- Members of staff have a thorough understanding of the needs of small children and use praise well to encourage them to try new things and to help build their confidence.
- Literacy and numeracy are promoted well and have improved significantly since the previous inspection. For example, in one group time for three- and four-year-olds, children counted six on their fingers and then found other ways of making the same number. In a group for two-year-olds, children learned a new counting song when playing with plastic ducks on the water.
- Children who have special educational needs or disability are included well in all activities and are supported effectively so that they can maximise their learning.
- Children who are learning to speak English as an additional language are given focused support. Speaking and learning new vocabulary are promoted well throughout the school day. For example, a few children enjoyed learning the sounds that farm animals make at the same time as playing with toy animals and learning how to say their names.
- Teachers' planning ensures that activities are boy-friendly to help close the gaps in learning between girls and boys. Consequently, boys are doing better than they have in the past.
- All staff are constantly checking that children are kept safe and healthy. They reinforce positive behaviours such as 'good sitting' and the importance of brushing teeth.
- Leaders are developing the provision for the most-able children well. For example, they are teaching phonics (the sounds letters make) at a more advanced level for this group. During the inspection, these children enjoyed helping a crocodile puppet to pack his suitcase with objects beginning with the letter 't' before having a go at writing words beginning with this sound.
- There remain a few occasions when activities are not sufficiently inspiring and do not move the learning of the most-able children on well enough in reading and writing. For example, the children did not choose the book area outside because it did not provide enough comfort and interest.
- Members of staff keep detailed records of the children's progress. The information kept on the three- and four-year-olds is specific about what children know and can do and supports the children's next steps effectively. The records for the two-year-olds are not always specific enough to help staff pitch work at the right level. When this happens, the work is too hard and children do not understand what they are expected to do and learn.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote children's personal development and welfare is good. Children are supervised well and kept safe. The two-year-olds benefit from the caring support of the staff and also learn by observing and following the older children at work.
- Children develop confidence and become good learners. The strong care provided by the adults enables children to feel safe and confident about trying new activities.
- Healthy snacks are attractively presented and are made appealing by encouraging the children to 'crunch the carrots'. Children know that they can help themselves to cups of water from the cooler.
- There is a wealth of physical activities to help the children to grow strong and stay healthy.
- Staff are rigorous in checking that activities provided are safe and are constantly checking that children are handling resources safely. As a result, children know that they should dress appropriately for wet weather and be in a space before kicking their legs.
- Leaders are aware that the school's paperwork on safety matters does not fully reflect the high expectations put into practice by members of staff and are in the process of updating this information.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Children enjoy learning and are independent. They make sensible choices about their tasks and concentrate well when working alone or with others. For example, one child worked for a long time so that she could finish her picture made from a range of attractive resources such as buttons and sequins.
- Children often remember good manners, such as saying please and thank you, and most are willing to wait for their turn. For example, a small group of children waited patiently and took turns putting pieces together in an animal jigsaw.

- The two-year-olds soon settle at school and follow the good example set by the older children.
- Behaviour has improved over time and, as a result, school records show a marked drop in accidents, including those caused by aggressive behaviour.
- Attendance, although not compulsory for this age group, has improved and lateness has reduced with the use of the main hall as a waiting area for parents and toddlers at the start and end of each session.
- Children listen well most of the time. Their attentiveness occasionally drops when staff do not help to move learning on quickly enough.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- The majority of children start school working below the levels expected for their ages. School information on how well the children are doing and class observations confirm that children make good progress from their starting points.
- Most children are working within the levels expected for their age when they leave the nursery. In addition, close links with the primary school help to prepare children for the next stage of their education.
- Children do well in all areas of learning, including literacy and numeracy, an area for improvement at the time of the previous inspection. They do especially well in learning how to listen and in becoming confident. They have good opportunities to use their imaginations in their work.
- All groups of children do well over time with only slight differences between various areas of learning.
- Children who have special educational needs or disability do well because work reflects their level of development. For example, resources are sometimes selected to make it easier for the child to make a sensible choice.
- Children who are learning to speak English as an additional language do so quickly because speaking and vocabulary are promoted well. For example, resources that match objects mentioned in stories and counting games are often made available to support learning.
- Disadvantaged children make the same good progress as the other children and any remaining gaps in their attainment are slight.
- Girls and boys make equally good progress and the school takes care to provide boy-friendly activities. For example, boys were very enthusiastic about exploring natural resources in the mud kitchen and using a clipboard to tick off what they found.
- Most-able children do well over time, although occasionally activities for reading and writing are not sufficiently inviting and, as a result, they do not extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding as quickly as they should.
- The two-year-olds make good progress overall, although at times the tasks are not judged well enough because information on how well they are doing lacks precision.

School details

Unique reference number	100769
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	10011903

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	123
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rebecca Lloyd
Headteacher	Colin Lavelle (executive headteacher)
Telephone number	020 7525 1192
Website	www.dulwichwood.com
Email address	office@dulwichwood.southwark.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 February 2014

Information about this school

- Dulwich Wood is an average-sized nursery school.
- The school leaders and governing body also lead and manage a primary school and five children’s centres within the Dulwich Wood Federation. The primary school and children’s centres are all subject to separate inspections.
- The school is expanding in size and currently has 63 children in the mornings and 60 in the afternoons. Of these, there are 12 children in the morning and 14 in the afternoon who are under three years old. Some children have full-time places according to their needs.
- An above-average proportion of children speak English as an additional language. Children come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and speak a wide range of languages.
- The proportion of children for whom the school receives the early years pupil premium grant is above average. The early years pupil premium is additional funding for children known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- The proportion of children who have special educational needs or disability is above average.
- The day-to-day running of the nursery school is led and managed by the assistant headteacher.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons, all jointly with the assistant headteacher.
- Meetings were held with leaders, other members of staff, two members of the local authority and members of the governing body.
- There were too few responses from parents to the Ofsted 'Parent View' questionnaire for this to be scrutinised. The inspector held informal discussions with a number of parents.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well children are doing, planning documents and checks on the quality of teaching. The inspector also looked at the school development plan and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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