

Inspection of a good school: South Acton Children's Centre

Castle Close, Acton, London W3 8RX

Inspection dates:

24–25 September 2019

Outcome

South Acton Children's Centre continues to be a good school.

There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a section 5 inspection now.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children told me that, without exception, they like coming to school. They said that they enjoy playing with their friends and exploring the outside area very much. They also said that the adults who work with them are kind.

Children behave extremely well all of the time. They apply themselves to tasks with enthusiasm and try very hard. They always do as they are told.

Children's love of learning is quickly spotted by the teachers working with them. Teachers use the children's interest to help them learn in a way that is fun. Children live up to the adults' high expectations of them.

Children show affection towards their teachers. They trust that they will take very good care of them. Throughout their sessions they play very well with each other. More confident children enjoy looking after the younger ones. There is no bullying in the centre.

The centre has a busy, friendly atmosphere full of activity. This gives children the confidence they need to explore the surroundings. Children have a range of wonderful outdoor spaces to work in. For children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), a wealth of qualified support helps them do well.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

All areas of learning are taught well. Children get good learning opportunities in all subjects. Leaders ensure that children learn from first-hand experiences. For instance, they gain a grasp of number by counting duck eggs being hatched each year.

All subjects are planned carefully. Teachers and other adults meet to plan each week's

work, tailored to the children. This helps the adults plan activities that follow a clear sequence. Each child learns what they should, when they should.

Older children learn phonics as part of their reading work. Teachers are well trained in using the phonics programme to achieve this. Leaders keep regular checks on children's progress. Leaders do not allow any child to fall behind. When children are ready, they start to learn sounds which help them to read text. From then on, teachers get them reading straight away.

With support, children read accurately. An example of this was when I observed a teacher supporting two three-year-old children, who were starting to read a book which they had been looking at. Using phonics, as well as picture clues in the book, the children enjoyed taking turns to find out what was happening in the story.

Throughout the school, a clear emphasis is placed on promoting literacy skills. The school has a well-stocked library. Classrooms have a good range of home-made and published books. All this helps children develop their own love of reading.

Three specialist units cater for children with SEND. Here, expert teaching ensures that children make great strides and can access the full curriculum.

Teachers understand the difficulties faced by children with SEND. They encourage them to try their best. Teachers adapt their plans for these children. As a result, children with SEND learn well. This is true of the children in the main classes and the additional resourced provision.

The school's curriculum is well planned. It goes beyond academic work and helps to bring cohesion throughout the school. It extends beyond the classroom to include regular visits to local places of interest, such as Hyde Park. The school values its curriculum partnerships with parents and carers. However, this work is limited to literacy and numeracy skills development and does not extend to other curriculum areas.

Leaders ensure that a sharp focus is given to making sure that those at risk of falling behind are spotted quickly. Teachers then act quickly so that these children gain the skills necessary to help them make progress, for instance in reading.

The school is very well led and managed. Senior leaders provide strong but caring leadership. They ensure that the needs of the children are uppermost while ensuring that staff morale is high. This means teachers work hard, frequently 'going the extra mile' for the children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to spot potential signs of neglect or abuse. They follow the school's policy for managing concerns. They know what to do if they think a child may be at immediate risk. Leaders act immediately on concerns that are brought to their attention.

They work with the local authority and other agencies to ensure that children get the help they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders should continue to develop the existing work they do with parents about the school's curriculum. So far, they have concentrated on the skills of numeracy and literacy. They should now expand this further to include all areas of learning within the school's curriculum.
- The information the school gives parents should be designed so that parents can be confident about how they can support these areas at home.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 7 July 2015.

How can I feedback my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	101861
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	10088807
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	153
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Simon Hall
Headteacher	Beverley Kellett
Website	www.southactoncc.com
Date of previous inspection	7–8 July 2015

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized nursery school. It provides part-time or full-time education for nursery-aged children, some of which are under three.
- The school is situated within the South Acton Children’s Centre where provision provides wraparound care and support for children and babies from birth.
- The school has three base classes for children with SEND: one is for children with autism spectrum disorder, one for communication and language needs and one for complex needs. Places in these units are allocated by the local authority.
- The proportion of children who are from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average.

Information about this inspection

- I visited all classrooms; several lesson visits were carried out jointly with members of the school’s leadership team.
- I heard children read in one class. I talked to children in lessons and looked at samples of children’s work.
- I looked at a range of documents, including the school’s improvement plan and records of pupils’ behaviour, safeguarding and attendance. I also scrutinised assessment

information and records of meetings of the governing body.

- I met with teachers and spoke with children. A meeting was held with the chair of the governing body. A phone call was also held with a representative from the local authority. I held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- I gave particular attention to inspecting the following subjects: mathematics, reading, and personal and social education. In addition, I looked at the quality of leadership at the school.

Inspection team

Tim McLoughlin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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