

Inspection of an outstanding school: Vanessa Nursery School

14 Cathnor Road, London W12 9JA

Inspection date:

29 March 2023

Outcome

Vanessa Nursery School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is a wonderful, happy place, where children flourish. Parents and carers shared how keen their children were to come to nursery every morning.

Leaders place great emphasis on building strong relationships with children and their families. The approach to behaviour is built on these excellent relationships. Staff teach children to respect each other, adults and the environment. Consequently, children's behaviour is exemplary. They have a strong understanding of fairness and turn taking. Any upsets are dealt with quickly and effectively. One parent, with a view typical of many, explained that her child said: 'There are no best friends in the nursery; we're all friends.'

Leaders have high expectations of what children can achieve socially, emotionally and academically. Staff have created a safe, nurturing environment. Children develop the fundamental building blocks they need for future success. For example, children learn to dress themselves and develop their understanding of water safety while swimming in the school's pool. Staff encourage children to learn to be independent. For example, staff help children to butter their own toast, cut up their own fruit, serve themselves lunch and mop up after water play.

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

Leaders, governors and staff are determined that children will get the very best start to their education. They have created an ambitious curriculum, with clear end points. For instance, children learn to follow a simple recipe to bake bread. Staff check precisely how well children are doing towards achieving these goals. If any child is falling behind, leaders give children additional support. This helps children to keep up with the curriculum content. In this way, children are exceptionally well prepared to start primary school.

Leaders ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive exemplary support. Staff are highly skilled at identifying children's needs quickly. They then work together and, where necessary, with external specialists, to meet those needs. For example, staff help children by providing regular and focused talk sessions to support the development of their expressive language. Children with SEND achieve exceptionally well.

Leaders and staff have a sharp focus on developing children's communication and language skills. Staff are adept at modelling precise language to support children's vocabulary. Staff introduce new language to children skilfully. They practise new words regularly so that children know these accurately. For example, children knew the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' in depth. This helped children to sequence the life cycle of a butterfly correctly, using words such as cocoon.

Leaders are meticulous in ensuring that children develop a love of reading. There are plenty of opportunities to join in with their favourite stories. Children often sit and share books throughout the day, such as during group time.

Staff equip children with the language needed to express their feelings. They explain routines clearly. Staff have very high expectations of what children can do, and they support children to meet these expectations. They promote independence and resilience at all times. Children respond very well to this and do not interrupt learning. They tidy up, problem-solve, take their own coats on and off and choose their own materials for art activities independently. Staff promote children's awareness of how to stay healthy. For instance, they support children to replenish their energy after engaging in exercise such as swimming.

Leaders ensure that children experience a range of activities that further promote their personal development. They visit the local theatre and go to galleries and museums. At lunchtime, staff encourage children to speak politely and to uphold good manners.

Staff are very happy working in this school. They feel that they receive excellent training, which continually improves their practice. Staff comment that leaders consider their well-being and workload when making decisions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are knowledgeable about reporting any concerns. Leaders make sure that processes are robust and well understood by all staff. Regular training ensures that staff's strong understanding is kept up to date. Positive relationships flourish, which means staff know children really well and can spot when they are upset.

Children trust the adults around them. Leaders ensure that the environment is conducive to keeping children safe. Children are taught to say 'stop, I don't like it' from the outset. Leaders make sure that record-keeping is detailed. They work well with external partners to ensure that the needs of families are met in a timely way.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in January 2014.

How can I feed back 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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	100316
Local authority	Hammersmith & Fulham
Inspection number	10268761
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	100
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Honor Mercer
Headteacher	Michele Barrett
Website	www.vanessanurseryschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school has its own swimming pool.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school and groups of staff.
- Inspectors also met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, spoke to teachers,

observed children's learning and spoke to them about what they were doing, and considered samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also considered other areas of learning.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding arrangements by checking safeguarding records and talking to leaders, staff, parents, children and the governing body.
- Inspectors considered a range of evidence relating to behaviour, attitudes and personal development by meeting with leaders, talking to children and reviewing relevant documentation.
- Inspectors met with parents as they dropped their children off, and they took into account the responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Jeanie Jovanova, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Andrea Bedeau

His Majesty's Inspector

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