

# Inspection of Maples Nursery School and Children’s Centre

East Churchfield Road, Acton, London W3 7LL

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Inspection dates: 25 May and 7 June 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
The quality of education	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Children are happy and settled. They interact confidently with different adults and their peers. Relationships are warm and respectful, and children are kind towards each other. This makes children feel safe, and adults ensure that they are kept safe each day. Staff work closely with families. Parents and carers are positive about their child's experiences.

Staff provide opportunities for children to experience the world beyond the nursery. For example, all children have visited the Science and the Natural History museums. Similarly, children celebrate a range of festivals, including Chinese New Year and Eid.

The curriculum is broad. Children typically engage well in the range of activities provided, sustaining their concentration whether working alone or with others. However, adults do not consistently focus on ensuring that children have secured the most important ideas. Adults do not sufficiently develop children's language. This limits how well children are prepared for the next stage of their education.

There has been turbulence in leadership over the last year. Those responsible for governance do not have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. This limits their knowledge of the school's effectiveness and their ability to prioritise the right aspects to improve.

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

Children experience a broad curriculum that aligns with what is expected nationally. Leaders have identified the concepts they expect children to learn. Thought has been given to how these develop for children of different ages in Nursery provision. Activities are generally designed to help children achieve the aims of the curriculum. For example, children practise mark-making using different materials on different surfaces. This gives older children the confidence to refine their marks when drawing familiar objects or beginning to write.

However, the curriculum does not sufficiently break down ideas into the small steps that children need to learn and practise. This means that adults typically focus on the tasks that children need to complete rather than on the important ideas they need to understand. Children's use of language is limited. Adults do not routinely model or extend children's language or use sufficiently ambitious vocabulary in different areas of learning.

Reading is prioritised throughout the Nursery provision. Children enjoy listening to and joining in with familiar stories, rhymes and songs. A popular family library promotes the importance of reading at home. Adults make careful observations of children's learning. This information is used to identify what children do well and what needs further practice. However, adults do not use this information effectively to address children's misconceptions. This limits how well some children learn.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are swiftly and accurately identified. Leaders work closely with external specialists, such as speech and language therapists, to secure appropriate advice, guidance and training. However, staff are not consistent in using this information when working with children. As a result, some children with SEND do not consistently get the opportunities they need to practise and embed learning and routines.

The curriculum has been designed to help children develop positive behaviours and attitudes towards learning. For example, children practise sharing, taking turns, using people's names and looking at the person who is speaking to them. This helps children to behave well in Nursery. Children's personal development is well considered. For example, adults promote the importance of healthy eating and hygiene. Children are encouraged to be increasingly independent when changing, toileting and eating. The on-site children's centre works closely with families, providing support in different areas.

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have an insufficient understanding of their role. They do not have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have not, therefore, identified the most important aspects that require improvement. Staff are passionate and committed. They acknowledge that the turbulence in leadership at the beginning of the school year impacted on their workload, including access to training. However, they now feel that their workload, professional development and well-being are better considered.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Children are safe in school. Staff are vigilant and recognise signs that a child may be distressed or at risk of harm. Adults know how to report any concerns they may have about children or adults. The curriculum has been designed to help children to keep themselves safe. For example, children learn how to use scissors and knives safely when cutting. Classrooms and the outside area are well organised and maintained.

At the start of the inspection, leaders and governors did not understand their statutory responsibilities to keep children safe. As a result, there was insufficient oversight of safeguarding practices. Leaders subsequently worked closely with the local authority to ensure that policies and systems, including training, were up to date and compliant with the most recent legislation.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Those responsible for governance have insufficient oversight of leaders' work. They do not have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness. Priorities for improvement are vague and not focused on the most significant weaknesses.

Governors must ensure that they receive appropriate training and information to aid them in supporting and challenging the work of leaders. This will help them to hold leaders to account for the quality of provision more effectively.

- The curriculum does not identify the small steps that children need to learn and practise. As a result, staff do not routinely focus on the important concepts and vocabulary that children need to secure. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum sets out the component steps that children need to learn to be successful. They must also check that staff understand these steps when implementing the curriculum, including when developing children's language.
- Staff do not use the information they have about children, including those with SEND, effectively. As a result, adults do not provide sufficient opportunity for children to practise what they need to in order to be successful. Leaders must ensure that adults use the information they have so that all children, including those with SEND, are better supported to learn and remember more.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	101858
<b>Local authority</b>	Ealing
<b>Inspection number</b>	10293223
<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	115
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jeremy Warrillow
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nick Hassanali (Acting Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.mapleschildrenscentre.com">www.mapleschildrenscentre.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- In total, 27 children access 30-hour provision. The remaining children on roll attend part time.
- The school includes provision for two-year-olds. There are currently 26 children accessing this provision.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. Inspectors deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

- This was the first routine inspection the school had 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.

- The inspection began on 25 May 2023 as an ungraded (section 8) inspection. It was deemed a graded (section 5) inspection, and inspectors returned to the school on 7 June 2023 to complete the inspection.
- The inspection team completed deep dives in communication and language, mathematics, understanding of the world, and personal, social and emotional development. To do this, they met with leaders, had discussions with staff and children, visited the Nursery setting, and looked at children's work and profile documents.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other areas of learning.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- Inspectors met with leaders, staff and the administrative manager.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. Discussions were also held with a representative of the local authority and the commissioned school improvement consultant.
- The inspection team reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising records and through discussions with staff and those responsible for governance.
- The views of parents and staff, gathered through discussions and Ofsted's surveys, were considered.

## Inspection team

Nick Turvey, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
John Kennedy	His Majesty's Inspector
Samantha Ingram, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Sarah Bailey	Ofsted Inspector

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