

# Inspection of Acacia Nursery

Cecil Road, Leytonstone, London E11 3HF

---

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 June 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

---

The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade

Good

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

Children adore coming to this nursery. They eagerly greet staff each morning and are excited for the day ahead. Children build close bonds with the staff, who know them well. Children behave well and develop immensely positive attitudes to learning.

Children learn lots about the world around them. For example, they find out about where food comes from and harvest vegetables from the garden. Staff skilfully support children's growing vocabulary, for example by talking to children about the parts of the plant, and pointing out the leaves, stems and roots. Children thoroughly enjoy learning about different foods and herbs, smelling, feeling and tasting the ingredients as they go. They especially like being able to use the firepit to cook the vegetables that they grow.

Leaders have created a curriculum that is highly structured and highly ambitious. This supports both children and staff to strive for well-considered goals. Staff make sure that all children receive the support and guidance they need to thrive and grow in confidence in all areas of learning. This is also the case for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Parents and carers of children with SEND were especially complimentary about the work of staff and leaders. They appreciate how the nursery ensures that all children are fully engaged in the learning. Children learn and explore confidently alongside their peers.

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

Leaders have thoroughly considered how the curriculum will be taught and delivered. They are clear about how each aspect of learning should be broken down so that it is easily understood and remembered by children. This clear curriculum thinking also supports staff very effectively. As staff work and play with children, they know exactly when and how to take children's learning further.

Leaders and staff regularly take time to discuss what each child has been learning. Through these discussions, staff plan what children need to learn next and how to support them. Staff are alert to any gaps in children's understanding and give extra practice in anything that children struggle to understand and remember. Leaders have ensured that staff have the training and knowledge they need to be experts in promoting children's development in all areas of learning.

Leaders and staff deliver a curriculum that places a strong focus on children developing communication and language skills. Focused, daily sessions lay the foundations children need for early reading, including recognising and remembering the sounds that they hear in words. When selecting activities and resources, leaders give careful thought to how these will promote children's progression across the curriculum. For example, to support early writing, leaders and staff gradually build up children's knowledge of how to hold and use a pencil correctly. This is not only

through lots of practice with pencils and brushes but also through balancing on apparatus and manipulating clay and play dough. All of this helps to develop children's readiness to write and make marks. Children were eager to share their work with visitors, proudly showing their drawings and emerging writing.

Staff share many books, stories and songs with children throughout the day. Adults read stories enthusiastically and children join in with rhymes and familiar sections of stories. Leaders have carefully considered how stories support what is being taught throughout the year. They have chosen books that reflect and extend children's experiences.

Children's learning is enriched through visits to galleries and museums. For example, following a trip to the Tate gallery, children worked together to create a large sculpture referencing some of the sculptures they had seen and their love of colour. Children learn about the importance of caring for others. For example, they get involved in looking after the school's tortoises.

Through the nurturing environment, children learn to understand and follow the school's routines and expectations. Children take turns and share when choosing their activities. During the adult-led activities, which punctuate the day, children join their groups without a fuss and settle quickly. They take part enthusiastically with discussions about what they have been learning. Children wait patiently for their lunch in the 'restaurant' during shared mealtimes. The needs of all children, including the two-year-olds and those with SEND, are well understood. Staff support them sensitively, helping them to grow in independence.

Staff and leaders work closely with each other. Staff are proud to work at Acacia. They feel that leaders consider their well-being and make suitable adaptations to ensure that they can carry out their work effectively.

Governors understand the strengths of the school and have the same high ambitions for children's outcomes as leaders and staff.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders and staff know children and their families well and have built strong relationships. This helps parents to feel secure in asking for help from the school when they need to. Staff know how to identify and report any worries. Leaders follow up on any concerns quickly. They work effectively and sensitively with external agencies and parents when required.

The curriculum teaches children about keeping safe. Children learn about where they can go for help. Staff are well trained and are confident in the support that they receive from leaders on keeping children safe.

## 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>	103030
<b>Local authority</b>	London Borough of Waltham Forest
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241279
<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>	107
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Rachel Howcroft
<b>Headteacher</b>	Maureen Okoye
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.acacianursery.co.uk">www.acacianursery.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The governing body maintains a close working relationship with Arbor Academy Trust. A service level agreement with the trust is in place to support leadership arrangements at the school. Two trustees sit on the governing body.
- The school particularly benefits from its links with the other two schools in the trust. The three schools share an executive principal, who is also the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The school offers before- and after-school provision for children who attend the school. This provision is managed by the governing body.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team and members of staff. Inspectors also met with members of the governing body and spoke with a local authority representative.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language, mathematics, personal, social and emotional development, and understanding the world. For each of these areas of learning, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons and spoke with staff and children. Inspectors also considered the curriculum for other areas of learning.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses from parents.
- Inspectors spoke with children and staff about the school's work to keep children safe. Inspectors also considered safeguarding records and documentation, including the school's single central record of staff suitability checks.

### **Inspection team**

Adam Vincent, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Bailey

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023