



# McMillan Early Childhood Centre

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 102365  
**LEA** Hillingdon LEA  
**Inspection number** 276704  
**Inspection dates** 25 April 2006 to 26 April 2006  
**Reporting inspector** David Marshall AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery	<b>School address</b>	Judge Heath Lane
<b>School category</b>	Maintained		Hayes
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 5		UB3 2PD
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02085734427
<b>Number on roll</b>	123	<b>Fax number</b>	02085690486
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr John Scallon
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 May 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Ludmila Morris

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 5	<b>Inspection dates</b> 25 April 2006 - 26 April 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 276704
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

McMillan Nursery, known as the Early Childhood Centre, is situated in one of most deprived areas in the London Borough of Hillingdon. Since the last inspection the proportion of children learning English as an additional language has increased significantly and is now around half of the number on roll. There are twenty four different languages represented amongst the children. Attainment on entry is below average, with children's language skills being well below expectations for their age. The Centre offers many additional services: adult education; family learning and support services; community use and outreach; and drop-in facilities.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 1**

McMillan is an outstanding nursery. Led by an excellent headteacher and two highly experienced deputies, the staff put the children's learning and development of new skills and understanding central to all that they do. Their clear vision, along with the stimulating learning environment, ensures that all children make rapid progress and achieve really well. Children reach expected standards from a low start in many areas of their learning. The nursery is modest in its own self-evaluation, grading its effectiveness as good, whereas it is actually outstanding.

Excellent teaching and a highly stimulating curriculum enable children of all abilities and backgrounds to make very good progress in their learning. As one parent wrote, 'My son has progressed in leaps and bounds, enjoying singing, reading books and just being in the nursery.' The strong emphasis on speaking and learning new vocabulary is particularly successful with the increasing number of children with English as an additional language. The use of visual displays for the children to refer to when practising their writing, reading and reference skills is good, but could be improved by making better use of some of the bare, white walls.

Observations and assessments of what children know and can do are excellent and the information is used very well to challenge the children and to move them on to the next stage in their learning. The twice-weekly meetings held by staff to discuss individual children and their interests and advancement are thorough and incisive. The information shared at these meetings and decisions made are significant factors in supporting the rapid progress made by all children. Leadership and management are outstanding and a paramount reason as to why the nursery is so successful. The care and welfare and the personal development of children is central to how the nursery is led and managed. As a result, a particular strength of McMillan is the children's independent learning. The nursery has made good progress since the last inspection and provides very good value for money and has excellent capacity to continue to improve.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

Improve the use of displays to stimulate even more effective visual learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

The children achieve very well. They rise to the challenges they are set in their learning and make outstanding progress in acquiring new skills, knowledge and understanding. Many children start nursery with low levels of language development and many are also unsure how to work co-operatively with others. The outstanding focus on developing children's positive self esteem, confidence and independence enables children to make rapid progress and to reach the individual goals set for them. Many children reach expected levels in physical, creative, mathematical, personal social and

emotional development and in knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they leave the nursery. Standards in communication and listening are below expectations, but considering the increasing numbers of pupils who start at the nursery with limited or no English, children achieve very well. As one parent wrote, 'My daughter is constantly surprising me with the things she has learnt at nursery.'

Those children at an early stage of learning English make equally good progress as their peers. Well-planned activities openly encourage speaking and communication skills. There is no significant variation in the performance between different minority groups. Children with learning difficulties also make rapid progress and achieve very well through the encouragement and good interaction with staff.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The children make outstanding progress in their personal development. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. The children are very happy to be in the nursery and attendance is good. They are keen to discover more about the world around them. This is really helped by the stimulating outdoor learning environment. The children quickly become independent and confident learners and they respond very well to the high expectations adults set for them. A parent commented, 'My child thoroughly enjoys attending the nursery and has grown in confidence since she started.'

Children readily accept guidance and show mature attitudes for their age in choosing activities and trying out new experiences. For example, a group were working with real tools to "fix" a broken car in the outside area. Excellent adult intervention when needed allowed them to refine and develop their thinking so that they eventually solved the problem together.

The children develop a healthy respect for each other's cultures and beliefs. They work safely and enjoy healthy snacks and meals. Cooking sessions are used well to teach children about the benefits of healthy eating. Children are keen to join in all lessons and show very good behaviour. The way during the inspection that all children moved instantly from the outdoor area to a singing session on a single word was stunning. Children are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their school life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teaching is very effective because teachers have high expectations of what children can achieve and very good knowledge of the early year's curriculum. They are very clear about what they want children to learn and how to help them achieve to the best of their ability. Excellent observations of what individual children's interests are, and how well they are doing in their work are discussed daily. These discussions are an outstanding example of how the staff ensure that activities are immediately adapted

to incorporate what they know about children's abilities and interests and how they can challenge their learning further. This means that sessions include every child fully.

Because of consistently outstanding teaching, pupils make very good progress over time. Teachers are adept at developing and increasing children's vocabulary. They are particularly skilled in the use of imaginative play, setting up investigation activities that challenge children and stretch them in their achievement and learning. All children make huge gains in their understanding because adult's enthusiasm, along with an exciting curriculum and outstanding outdoor area, inspire children to ask questions and to find out more.

Very effective systems are in place to track children's progress. Teachers use assessment information very well to match work to children's abilities, providing good support for those with learning difficulties. More able children are equally well challenged. As a result, all pupils learn well and this contributes to the overall excellent progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The well-planned, rich and varied curriculum promotes relevant and practical activities both inside and outdoors. Hands-on activities make learning fun and children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. Children with learning difficulties are fully integrated. There is very good provision for those children at an early stage of learning English and a high priority is given in the curriculum to the development of speaking and extending the children's vocabulary.

The curriculum is always interesting and includes all relevant activities and does much to develop children's independent learning and freedom of choice. The quality of imaginative play is outstanding. There is effective use of information and communication technology, such as the digital camera that enthused a group outside. Creative development is equally well encouraged and children make great gains in designing and creating models and pictures. Throughout the year children have many opportunities to enhance their learning through visits to local places of interest, such as a Gudwara, museums and a local farm.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school provides a very high level of care for its pupils, and related procedures, including child protection, are very good. Pupils' safety and well being are paramount at all times. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that the school provides a very safe and supportive environment. Vulnerable children are looked after very effectively. The accommodation and grounds are regularly checked so that pupils can work and play in a safe environment. Risk assessments are carried out regularly, both around the nursery and when pupils go out on trips. The partnership with parents is exemplary. Over half of all parents returned the pre-inspection questionnaire and their responses were entirely positive. Assessment is used very well and individual and small group

work is very carefully planned to meet the individual interests of all children. As a result they become confident, independent and happy learners, who achieve very well.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are excellent. Leadership by the headteacher is outstanding and she has been very effective in leading a staff team that has maintained high standards over a number of years. However, the school's self evaluation is too modest. This modesty is entirely due to the headteacher, deputies and all staff having very high expectations and continuously striving to achieve more for the children in their care. They accurately identify key strengths and areas to develop and have good strategies in place to make further improvements. A good example of this is the analysis by the staff of 'Every Child Matters' that has led to the personal development, care and guidance of pupils being so strong. The school's ethos is such that all are valued and encouraged to achieve their best.

Teamwork is of a very high quality. Everyone plays a valuable part in moving the school forward. The work of the administrative officer in particular is a very considerable asset and is very much appreciated by parents and staff alike.

The opinions of parents and pupils are always valued and acted upon. The school has outstanding links with a range of other schools and organisations, all of which promote high quality provision. Governors make a good contribution to the school. They have become increasingly involved in the school and bring a wide range of skills to support the school's work. They are beginning to challenge decisions and request explanations but have correctly identified that they need to do more in reviewing strengths and areas for development. The nursery gives very good value for money and is excellently placed to continue providing a very good start to the children's education.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Children

I really enjoyed visiting your nursery. It is an excellent place to learn and a wonderful start to your education. I really liked the outside area and garden that you have. I know that you like your nursery and I agree with you it is a very special place.

You and your teachers do lots of things really well;\* You are very good at working out how to solve problems\* You try very hard and learn lots of interesting things\* All the grown-ups with you work very hard and make what you learn exciting\* You are very good at finding out about things and how they work and about the world around you.\* You are excellent in your imaginative play\* Your headteacher and other staff are very good at what they do.

I have asked the teachers to put up some more displays to help you even more with your letters and numbers.

With best wishes,

David Marshall

Lead inspector