



Tanglewood Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114698
LEA ESSEX LEA
Inspection number 279433
Inspection dates 13 June 2006 to 14 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Helen Ranger AI

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	Melbourne Avenue
School category	Community		CM1 2DX
Age range of pupils	3 to 5		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01245 352788
Number on roll	177	Fax number	01245 490248
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Ann Davidson
Date of previous inspection	15 May 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Ann Barker

Age group 3 to 5	Inspection dates 13 June 2006 - 14 June 2006	Inspection number 279433
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Tanglewood is one of two local authority nursery schools in Essex. Children mostly come from the Chelmsford area but some travel from much further afield. Children all attend for half-day sessions. The local neighbourhood includes areas of deprivation. While most children are from White British families, about 15% come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds and about half of these do not speak English as their first language. The school has a high level of children with learning difficulties or who have specific social or emotional needs. It includes a pre-school speech and language centre for children who need intensive speech and language support. Within the school there are also six places for children with other complex learning difficulties. When children start school, their attainment varies very widely but, overall, is below that typically seen in children of this age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Tanglewood Nursery is an outstanding school which gives exceptionally good value for money. It has an excellent reputation with parents who are extremely pleased with its provision. Their comments are typified by the one who wrote 'If only all children could be allowed the Tanglewood experience'. The school works so well because the headteacher communicates her vision of children's education in the early years very clearly to the rest of the staff and they skilfully translate this into practice. It is not complacent about its successes. The headteacher and deputy head set an excellent example in keeping themselves up-to-date with current thinking and research about how young children learn. They are selective and critical about any initiatives they undertake and constantly strive to ensure that they offer the best to their children. It is the outstanding leadership and management and the way the school has continued to provide a very high quality of education since the last inspection which means that it is in an excellent position to continue to improve. The assessments made by the staff and governors of the school's effectiveness are almost all accurate. However, they underestimate their own leadership, capability, judging it to be only good. Inspectors consider that, because of its very effective impact on children's progress, leadership is outstanding. Because staff cater so well for every individual's needs, the children's achievements are excellent and their personal development outstanding. From a starting point that is often below average, they reach standards that are above those expected by the time they move on to their next schools. They rapidly develop basic skills in all areas of learning that will stand them in good stead in the future. The gains in their personal development are particularly impressive. They become confident, enthusiastic learners who greatly enjoy school. They work well independently or in groups because all activities are underpinned by planning that encourages basic social skills and positive attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is exemplary. School is a haven for them and they learn how to keep themselves and others safe in their work. They are developing very good foundations for healthy lifestyles by high levels of physical and mental activity and by establishing very good relationships with adults and each other. Children are encouraged to express their ideas and opinions which contribute to how the school operates. The quality of teaching is outstanding. The four parallel classes work to the same philosophy and approach and this ensures consistency for all the children. Of particular note are the ways staff plan activities to suit individual needs, the quality of teachers' questioning that extends learning, and the regular detailed checks of children's progress that are used in the planning of subsequent lessons. The nursery nurses and teaching assistants are highly skilled and work very closely with the teachers. Children who need extra adult help receive it and are supported to take part in all activities and progress very well. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities have excellent support through the speech and language centre, the Nurture Group and individual attention according to their needs. The school makes full use of the expertise of relevant external support, such as speech therapists. All classes provide a caring, purposeful environment with very good quality resources. The day-to-day personal care of the children is outstanding. Every child matters and the staff are tireless in ensuring that each one thrives. The curriculum is excellent,

providing a wide range of exciting activities that promote high achievement. Outdoor education is of a very high quality and children move seamlessly between the classroom and playground areas. The school is determined to make its outdoor provision even better by giving children more opportunities for problem-solving tasks. Staff also plan to carry out more detailed analysis of children's movement so that they can tailor activities closely to individual needs. The success of these initiatives so far indicates that continuing them will improve the overall provision further. The school is recognised locally, nationally and internationally as a centre of excellence. It welcomes hundreds of visitors each year and makes a considerable contribution to training personnel from education and health services across Essex. This aspect of its work also ensures that Tanglewood children benefit from the contributions of visitors to the school's development and from the staff constantly reviewing and refining their practice. The teamwork of staff and governors supports all the school's achievements. The headteacher works particularly closely with the chair and vice-chair of governors who are very experienced in school management. Both the staff and the governors have effective and accurate systems for checking how well they are doing and determining what needs to be done next. Their clear vision of the school's purpose, constant attention to staff development and regular monitoring of standards ensure that the school continues to thrive.

What the school should do to improve further

- Carry out the plans to make further enhancements to the outdoor provision, focusing on extending opportunities for problem-solving activities and improving the quality of children's movement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children from all backgrounds do extremely well. Although most are in school for only three terms on a part-time basis, they make exceptional progress. This is because they are taught so well and activities interest them so much. Those who have a gift or a talent make extremely rapid progress. This is because their needs are identified very accurately and targets for improvement set. Those who have learning difficulties or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational need, make rapid progress on the 'small step' targets that are set for them. Those whose first language is not English very quickly learn to understand and speak the language. The school's tracking of children's progress shows they make exceptionally good gains in all areas of learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's behaviour and attitudes to learning are outstanding because teachers' and other adults' expectations are high and clear. Attendance is high. The success of the school's commitment to encouraging healthy lifestyles is evident in its Advanced

Healthy Schools Award. With parental support, children are encouraged sensitively to think of others through their fund-raising for charities, such as for books for Broomfield Hospital. Children develop excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, through the stimulating learning activities. They begin to appreciate the wonder of the natural environment. For example, one child showed amazement when she looked at the grass seeds her class had planted, commenting 'Look how much it's grown!'

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching is consistently of very high quality in all four classes and for the children in the speech and language centre. As well as the highly effective teamwork of the staff, the regular contribution of many parent helpers, ensures that children receive high levels of adult attention. This enables all children to take such good advantage of the opportunities that are offered in all areas of learning. Each teacher keeps excellent records of children's attainment that help them to plan very effectively for future work and show the progress made by every child over each term. Adults carry out simple target-setting for children as appropriate and make regular observations of how the children are doing in relation to these goals.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is very effectively planned around a theme each term to include many of the aspects of learning appropriate for the age group. The remainder of the areas of learning for the term are taught through a very well planned range of purposeful play activities. Children have very good opportunities to choose activities themselves, so that they develop good personal skills. Recent attention to planning problem-solving tasks and developing children's thinking skills is bearing fruit, for example, in the ways children use the 'Big Ideas' house for investigative work. The work planned for the children in the speech and language centre is tailored very well to individual needs. Interesting visits are planned each year, for instance, to the beach at Walton on the Naze. The school is small for the number of children on roll. Not an inch of space is wasted. Both indoor and outdoor areas contain a wide range of good quality, well organised resources that enhance the provision for children.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school works very effectively with parents and carers. Induction procedures are excellent, including home visits and a 'staggered' entry, so that all children settle in quickly. The school has taken significant steps to make the transition to the next school as smooth as possible, with projects and photographs of the inside of local schools to help children feel confident about the move. The school takes children's

safety into account at all times, with strong child protection and health and safety arrangements. Children confidently approach staff with their thoughts, feelings and concerns and know that an adult will try to help them if there is a problem. The detailed records of individual progress mean that adults can accurately guide children in both the personal and academic progress. This includes high quality attention to recording the progress of children in the speech and language centre that supports their achievements. The school ensures that all parents have a very clear understanding of their child's attainment and progress through summaries on reports each term and suggestions for future improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The school is exceptionally well led and managed. The school's written development plans communicate its priorities well, especially where they make clear how initiatives will enhance children's achievements. Governance is good. The chair and vice-chair of governors have worked with the school for many years and know it well. There is a higher than usual turnover of parent governors because children are only in the school for a short time. In spite of this, a core of experienced governors supports the school's continuing development well. With its current team of staff and governors and their track record in maintaining high standards, there is an excellent capacity for continuing improvement.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	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	1	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

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	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

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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

I hope a grown up will read this letter with you. We want you to know how much we enjoyed visiting your lovely school. This is what we liked most about it: - You all get on very well together and this makes your school such a happy place to be. - You are learning how to do new things very quickly. - Your teachers give you lots of interesting and exciting activities. - We think the things you play with outside are really good and your teachers want them to be even better. - You are lucky to have such good grown ups to teach you. - Mrs Barker makes sure your school keeps getting better in every way. - Your teachers listen to your ideas - like when you asked for bigger bricks to make better models and you got them! Thank you for helping us to find out about your school. Keep on having such a good time at Tanglewood.