

Mary Paterson Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101106
Local Authority	Westminster
Inspection number	285969
Inspection date	24 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Sue Vale

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jude Lawrence
Headteacher	Sylvie Gambell
Date of previous school inspection	29 April 2002
School address	13 Riverton Close Off Ashmore Road London W9 3DS
Telephone number	020 7641 5804
Fax number	020 7641 5649

Age group	3–5
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Mary Paterson Nursery School is situated in Westminster. Currently 40 children attend part-time and 20 attend full-time. Just under a half of all children are learning English as an additional language with a fifth identified as having delayed language development. Attainment on entry is well below what is expected for 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

Mary Paterson Nursery School provides an excellent start to children's education. Recently designated as a children's centre, the nursery is keen to develop its role in the community still further. Learning for all is central to what the Nursery strives to achieve, not only for the children but for their families as well. Parents are delighted with the Nursery and their feelings are encapsulated in the words of one parent; 'this is an absolutely excellent Nursery.'

There is excellent leadership by the headteacher who is supported very well by the staff. It is her vision that keeps the children at the centre of all that the Nursery aims to achieve. Most of the children start Nursery with below expected skills for their age. Around a half are learning English as an Additional language and there are increasing numbers of children identified with delay in their language acquisition. The outstanding curriculum, based and planned around the children's own interests and enthusiasms, is one of the reasons why children achieve so well. When they leave the Nursery, many reach standards which are above those expected in their personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative development. They make huge gains in their speaking and listening skills and in developing their communication, literacy and knowledge of numbers. Staff know the children, their families and their needs very well indeed. Consistently very good teaching, which is adapted to cater for the individual needs of children, ensures that children progress and achieve very well. This provides them with a strong foundation on which to build their next steps for learning.

Children's personal development and well-being and the care, guidance and support which they receive are outstanding. This means that children make exceptional gains in their personal, social and emotional development. They quickly become confident, happy learners. Children are very happy and keen to be at Nursery, although attendance amongst some families does not always reflect this. Parents feel very included in their children's learning; many comment that staff always have time for them. The Nursery plans to develop this work with parents further.

The Nursery has maintained high standards since the last inspection. Although the expenditure per child is high, it provides good value for money. The Nursery has excellent capacity to continue to improve and maintain its high standards.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on the firm start already made in developing the children's centre, particularly by increasing the involvement of children's families and the local community.
- Encourage better attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

'I am extremely pleased with my daughter's progress and development,' comments one parent echoing the sentiments of many others. Parents are right to feel like this as their children achieve very well. The majority of children start Nursery with skills particularly in communication language and literacy, personal social and emotional development below expectations. Children make very good progress in their learning whatever their starting point. By the time they leave Nursery many reach above expected levels for their age in personal, social and emotional development; this is exceptional progress. Consequently because they make such good gains

in developing their confidence they achieve very well in other areas as well. The Nursery has high expectations of all children, and teachers work very closely as a team to support children's individual needs and interests. Those children with English as an additional language make very good progress as a result of an emphasis placed on speaking and listening in the planned activities. Children with learning difficulties and disability make very good gains in their emotional and social development as a result of individualised support provided by teachers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development and well-being are excellent. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The outstanding focus on developing children's positive self esteem, confidence and independence is highly influential in helping children to make rapid progress and to reach high standards. This is because they are interested and encouraged to want to learn and to find out more. The excellent facilities available in the outdoor garden area motivate and stimulate their curiosity. Children make a positive contribution to the Nursery community. They work safely, and are encouraged to adopt a healthy life style. Despite the Nursery explaining to parents the importance of children attending regularly, attendance is low.

Individual and small group work, planned to meet the individual interests of children, enhances their personal, social and emotional development and this helps all children to progress well. For example, a recent trip to the woods developed into a whole project about living in tepees and cooking on open fires. Children are encouraged to take risks whilst being in a safe environment, such as climbing ladders under supervision and releasing sand to see how sand falls down drainpipes. This sort of activity allows children to experiment and become independent learners.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching is consistently very good with some outstanding adult interaction with the children. Excellent use of questioning by adults encourages children to develop their 'thinking' skills. This really helps them to make very good progress and to learn. A parent has written; 'The emphasis on learning is through fun and play.' This sums up the way teachers teach. All adults who work with the children have a very good understanding of their individual needs and abilities. Adults have the balance right between when to leave children to explore and find out things for themselves and when adults need to be involved in order to challenge and move children's learning on. This was seen in both the nurture group and language support group which the nursery runs. Effective systems are in place to track children's progress. Staff use assessment information well to match work to children's abilities, providing very good support for those with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. It is planned from the children's own interests and enthusiasms. As one parent commented, 'One of the nursery's best features is an exceptionally creative and broad curriculum highly responsive to the children's own interests.' 'The children themselves

are fully involved in planning....everything is followed through with the children from start to finish.' Hands-on activities make learning fun and children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and to make their own decisions when solving problems. The children do this very well. There is very good use of information and communication technology (ICT) by the children through the use of digital photography. Children who have difficulties communicating through speech are encouraged to use the digital cameras to make power point presentations of photos they have taken to express their individual interests. This is excellent practice. This in turn develops children's confidence in their own abilities. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are fully integrated and involved in Nursery life.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Many parents comment on the very good care which their children receive. As one said, 'since starting at Mary Paterson Nursery school my son has become more independent, confident and sociable.' Teachers are very sensitive to the needs of children. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those who are new to learning English receive very good support from teachers to help them achieve as well as others. The procedures to deal with child protection issues, accidents and incidents are in place, and staff receive regular training.

The school has very effective systems for assessing and recording learners' attainment and progress. Teachers make regular observations of what children know and can do and of the activities which they like to visit. This information is then used well to guide the planning of the next challenging step of children's learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are excellent. Leadership by the headteacher is outstanding. There is a clear vision of how best to develop further the Nursery as a children's centre and this is shared by all involved in the Nursery. It is very much a team effort. The Nursery accurately identifies key strengths and areas it wishes to improve.

Children are at the centre of every decision made at Mary Paterson and the headteacher is very good at identifying and acting upon priorities to ensure that children consistently achieve and perform to the best of their abilities and to become happy confident, independent learners. The well organised, stimulating curriculum and activities are planned to match individual children's interests and learning intentions, which results in rapid progress being made in learning. For example, an interest from one child about the bones found inside a fish have led to some detailed work on bodies and skeletons, to the extent that they cut open an ox's heart to see what it was like inside. Professional development is given a high priority in the school for all staff and governors and this helps keep expectations high of what can be achieved. There is good governance of the school. The governing body is shared with another local Nursery under a Federation. Governors are invited to be involved in training activities for staff and this gives them a keen insight into what is happening in the Nursery. The school is very well placed to continue providing an excellent start to children's education.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

7 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Mary Paterson Nursery School, London, W9 3DS

I really enjoyed visiting your Nursery. It is a lovely friendly place to learn and gives you a wonderful start to your education. You are very lucky to have the lovely garden to play in.

You and your teachers do lots of things really well;

- You are very good at playing and working together.
- You reach very good standards and achieve really well.
- You are all treated equally at your nursery and you are lucky to be able to choose some of the activities which you want to do yourselves.
- You work very hard and learn lots of interesting things and you appear to be very happy.
- Your teachers also work very hard and make what you learn interesting.
- Your teachers care for you very well and are very good at looking after those of you who need extra help and support.

Your headteacher and other staff are very good at what they do. They are working very hard at developing the Nursery into an even more special Children's Centre.

Some of you do not come to Nursery often enough. I hope that you will explain to your families how much you enjoy Nursery and try to go every day.

With best wishes

Sue Vale
Lead inspector