

Hampden Way Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101252
Local Authority	Barnet
Inspection number	286006
Inspection dates	14–15 June 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	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs D White
Headteacher	Ms J Gurney
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2001
School address	Hampden Way Southgate London N14 5DJ
Telephone number	020 8368 2131
Fax number	020 8361 6818

Age group	3–5
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The Nursery has 85 children attending part-time. There are 50 part time places for morning and afternoon and 24 designated full time places. Around 10% are identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities. Approximately a fifth of children are learning English as an additional language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Hampden Nursery School is an excellent school with many outstanding features. Children receive a very good quality start to their education. One parent commented, 'It is a happy place where the children enjoy themselves...my children have been well prepared for starting school'.

The headteacher and staff work well together as a team and have a clear understanding of the strengths of the Nursery and what it needs to do to develop further as it works towards designation as a children's centre. There are plans to involve families, the community and external agencies more extensively.

Children begin school with a wide range of abilities. Their overall standards are broadly as expected when they start at Nursery. The ethos of the Nursery is a play-centred approach to learning. This means that everything centres on learning through play and discovery. This is effective and children really enjoy it and are very happy in their education. Excellent teaching and an interesting, varied curriculum also support their development. This means that by the time they leave Nursery, they have made very good progress and have achieved very well. A majority of children attain above expectations and make excellent progress in several areas of learning. This provides them with a very good start for the next stage of their education.

Children's personal development and well-being are excellent. They are very keen to be at Nursery. Children are successfully encouraged to become independent and confident learners. They are involved in the planning of what will happen next in Nursery and they work and play together very well.

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are also excellent. Children receive a positive start to their school life because the staff have a high commitment to meeting the needs of all children. Observations and assessments of what children know and can do are very good and help children to move on in their learning. Achievements are celebrated in children's 'blue profile books'.

The curriculum is varied and captures children's interest, often because what is on offer stems from the children's own interests. Overall they have very good basic skills which prepare them well for the next stage of their education. Information and communication technology (ICT) is understood and used very well by the children and is a major reason why the curriculum is outstanding.

The Nursery has maintained good standards since the last inspection and provides good value for money. It has good capacity to continue to improve and maintain its standards as its facilities for the community grow with the development of the children's centre.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the involvement of children's families, the local community and external agencies is increased as the school implements its plans to become a children's centre.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The children achieve very well and many reach high standards for their age. Many start nursery with broadly as expected skills in all areas of learning. They make rapid progress and reach good standards particularly in developing their early attempts at writing. An example of this

was seen when children were making menu cards to go with the pizza they had made. Many children are on target towards reaching the early learning goals and, in a number of cases, exceeding where they are expected to be for their age by the time they leave the nursery. This is particularly the case in communication language and literacy, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. This represents very good achievement. In creative and physical development, they reach the expected standards.

Those children at an early stage of learning English make equally quick progress as their peers. Well planned activities, with excellent adult intervention, geared to the individual needs and interests of the children, strongly encourage speaking and communication skills, so that children achieve particularly well in this area of learning. There is no significant variation in the performance of different minority groups. Children with learning difficulties also make rapid progress and achieve very well through the encouragement and good interaction with staff. The introduction of the use of Makaton, a system of sign language, is having a positive effect on the progress made by all children.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development and well-being are excellent. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The children are very happy and keen to discover more about the world around them. This is helped by the stimulating learning environment both indoors and outside. The children quickly become independent and confident learners and they respond very well to the high expectations of concentration and behaviour which adults set for them. This is seen when children are involved in planning the activities that they would like to see on offer both inside and outside. This is a very positive way that children grow in confidence and start to take responsibility for their own learning. Consequently, many children show mature attitudes for their age in choosing activities and trying out new experiences. These are valuable skills that will benefit the children in later life. A number of parents have also pointed out how quickly their children have grown in confidence since starting at Nursery, for example, 'he has developed into a very confident and caring child'.

Children show high levels of concentration as seen when joining in group activities such as using the 'parachute'. They work safely, whilst at the same time they are encouraged to take risks in their learning so that they learn from their mistakes. They enjoy healthy snacks. Children are keen and happy to attend Nursery and they show a real love of learning. Attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are very good with some excellent features. Adults ensure that there is a wide variety of activities on offer, which encourages children to want to learn. An excellent feature is the way that adults encourage children to think for themselves, through very good use of questioning to encourage them to make decisions. For example, children are involved in planning sessions to decide what activities they would like to see available next. This approach shows them that they are valued and really supports their personal and emotional development, whilst encouraging the development of their speaking and listening. The children really enjoy

learning, they are proud of what they do, and eager to share their new knowledge and skills with adults. This was demonstrated with the immense interest and concentration which some of the children showed when observing snails.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The well-planned, stimulating and varied curriculum promotes relevant and practical activities both inside and outdoors. As one child said, 'sometimes I don't know what to do because they're all my favourite things.' This view is echoed by parents, as one parent commented about her son's experience, 'he has the opportunity to try so many different activities; he can't wait to get there in the morning'. Hands-on activities make learning fun and children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. They do this very successfully as the children themselves are responsible and involved in the development of the curriculum and the activities which they would like to see on offer. 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. There is very effective use of ICT, such as the use of the interactive white board, and the way that children have ownership of the digital cameras. They use these very well and the pictures they take are successfully employed to develop their individual interests within the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support for children are excellent. The Nursery is safe and secure and staff work very closely with parents to ensure their children's well-being. Many parents wrote to the inspector expressing their confidence in the way the nursery looks after their children. As one parent commented, 'I am very happy to leave my son in the care of the staff.... He is well cared for and receives a good level of attention and discipline.' This sums up how many parents feel, and is a reflection of the very positive care and guidance given to children and families alike. Risk assessments are carried out, both around the nursery and for when children go out on a visit. 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, along with the children's own input 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 particularly strong. 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. It is very much a team effort. The Nursery accurately identifies key strengths and areas it wishes to improve. Parental involvement is encouraged and contributes very significantly to the children's achievement.

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. Professional development is given a high priority in the school for all staff and this

helps keep expectations high of what can be achieved. There is good governance of the school. Governors are knowledgeable and supportive. They ask searching questions and have given positive support in aiming for the development of the Nursery as a children's centre. The school involves other agencies very effectively in its work but there is scope to extend this and to involve the community more in the development of the children's centre. The school is very well placed to continue providing an excellent start to children's education.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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

26 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Hampden Way Nursery School, London, N14 5DJ

I really enjoyed visiting your Nursery. It is a lovely friendly place to learn and a wonderful start to your education. I enjoyed looking at the snails with you. Some of their shells were very beautiful.

You and your teachers do lots of things really well.

- You are very good at concentrating on activities when you are interested in them.
- You work hard and learn lots of interesting things.
- Your teachers help you learn and show you how to do new things.
- What you learn is very interesting and you are fortunate that you are involved in planning things to find out about.
- You are very good at the way you use information and communication technology such as the digital cameras and the interactive white boards.
- You are looked after and cared for very well.

Your headteacher and other staff are very good at what they do. They are working very hard to involve your families and other people who live nearby, as they get ready for turning the Nursery into a children's centre.

With best wishes

Sue Vale Lead inspector