



Moss Hall Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101253
Local Authority Barnet
Inspection number 286007
Inspection date 18 January 2007
Reporting inspector Carmen Rodney HMI

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

Type of school	Nursery	School address	189 Nether Street
School category	Maintained		Finchley
Age range of pupils	3-5		London N3 1NR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8445 2518
Number on roll (school)	130	Fax number	020 8492 0280
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Councillor Brian Salinger
		Headteacher	Ms Perina Holness
Date of previous school inspection	27 February 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Moss Hall Nursery School is housed in a spacious detached Victorian house set out over two floors with considerable outdoor space. The nursery draws its children from a diverse range of cultural and social backgrounds. It has successfully maintained the tradition of registering children from the same family year on year. There is a broad range of abilities of children entering the nursery, some are very young, and enter the nursery just after their third birthday. Over 42% of the children speak a language other than English and altogether, 27 different languages are spoken among the school population. The school is renowned locally and externally for its curriculum provision and planning, in particular its specialist provision for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and currently, there are six children identified. The nursery school provides full and part time provision. A range of support services and extended provision is provided for over half of the children. Currently, steps to develop the extended services initiative is under review. The majority of children transfer to Moss Hall Infants, the adjoining infants school. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed to the school in 2005. The school has a stable staff and population of children.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. The nursery is very popular and over-subscribed because of its increasing reputation in the locality. It provides a very happy, safe, caring, warm and nurturing environment, which parents fittingly describe as moving from 'home to home' primarily as their children enjoy school immensely. These messages come across strongly from the vast majority of parents who are very proud of the nursery. The very large and positive response to the parents' questionnaire conveys parents' eagerness for others to know about the quality of provision at the nursery. One parent wrote, 'I wish all children of all ages could go to the school with this sort of atmosphere because I think they would be happier and learn so much more academically and socially'. The communication and partnership work with parents and other agencies is excellent. Parents appreciate the high quality feedback on their children's development, the enrichment activities, extended day and guidance on how their children learn.

Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. Attitudes and behaviour are excellent as is their sense of responsibility towards each other. Opportunities to share, work in pairs or small groups impact positively on children's behaviour as they learn to take turns and listen to each other. Children's very good grasp of a healthy lifestyle has affected the way in which they are keen to eat healthily and take part in the HAPPY project exercise. This work has had a lasting impact on them. As a parent noted, 'My doctor was shocked at my daughter's medical knowledge when she began talking about muscles, abdomen...'

The children experience a good start to their education and they achieve well. Children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, creative development and in communication, language and literacy. By the end of their three terms in the nursery, most reach the expectations for their age group with some exceeding them. They receive a good foundation for future learning.

Children achieve well because of the good quality teaching which stems from an outstandingly good curriculum and the outstanding care, guidance and support for all children. A rich environment welcomes the children and underpins their enjoyment of being in the nursery. The environment successfully captures children's cultural heritages. Teachers have good expectations of what children can do and understand and as a result, the learning environment is very well organised; it generates interests and stimulates children's thinking, so they are encouraged to learn as they explore a wide range of resources. Teachers assess and record children's progress securely. However, at this stage, tracking of the children's progress is not yet thorough enough to quickly identify and make adjustments to provision for any groups or children who might not be accessing all areas of learning or failing to meet expectations. A new initiative to track the progress of children at the early stage of learning English has been introduced and this provides a good basis for further developments in this aspect of the school's work.

Leadership and management are good overall, but the leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy is very strong, as evidenced by the impact of the changes she has brought about since her appointment. She is committed to the nursery school and constantly seeks out new initiatives to improve the quality of provision. A good example is the way in which research findings on mathematics are used to improve children's mathematical development. Governors fulfil their roles effectively. They work well with the senior leaders on monitoring provision, the school improvement plan and initiatives such as the extended school day. The school's understanding of its success is good. It has made significant changes since the previous inspection and its capacity for further improvement is excellent.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the way staff track all children's progress is as rigorous as it is for those learning English as an additional language.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the nursery, with the vast majority working within the levels expected for three-year-olds and with some achieving above expectations by the end of their three terms in the nursery. Children make most progress in their personal, social and emotional development, creative development and in developing their language skills. Children at the early stage of learning to speak English make good progress in reaching the expected levels in communication, language and literacy. Boys' and girls' achievement is equally good. There is no marked difference in the achievement of children from different ethnic groups.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. The children show good concentration and strive to do well because expectations are high, and activities are used well to captivate them. Most children become confident and independent learners because enjoyment is given a high priority and activities are well structured. They demonstrate a great deal of understanding for each other, work very well together, care for new arrivals and show that they have excellent social skills. Attendance is excellent for children of this very young age and has improved significantly since the last inspection. Children understand very well how to keep safe and healthy because of the many projects and activities, which the nursery uses to widen their learning experience. It is therefore not surprising throughout every session to see children eating healthy snacks. Children therefore play very well together and show respect for each other's colour, customs and language because of the value the school places on each child's heritage.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Children learn well because teachers use their good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum to plan well-structured learning experiences and they value each child. Activities are well matched to needs and specialist teaching assistants and nursery nurses are carefully managed to support individuals or groups of children. This makes a strong contribution to children making good progress, in particular, there is very good attention to the needs of children learning English as an additional language or for those with a learning difficulties.

Teaching draws very well on children's interests and cultural heritages. Classrooms are very well resourced with displays and materials for children to handle and to support learning. Teachers use resources very well to captivate children's attention as they show children how to make the best use of them. In a short reading session, despite hearing the mighty wind and heavy rainfall, children were not distracted; rather, they were engrossed and contributed to the telling. Children learn well because their success is celebrated and they are involved in assessing their work and can talk with understanding about the work in their scrapbooks. Teachers assess children's work but are not always consistent in tracking the progress of different groups of children or identifying children who might have missed an aspect of the Early Years curriculum.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum including the outdoor curriculum is outstanding because of its responsiveness to children's individual needs. The rich variety of activities and creative approach to organising the learning environment contribute very well to children's enjoyment of learning. The school has over 50 different cultures present and great care is taken to ensure that children are given many opportunities to learn about each other's culture. Enrichment activities, such as visits to museums and allotments are used very well to excite children's curiosity to learn. Creative development is a real strength of the school. Children have many opportunities to develop their artistic flair, for example, working alongside local artists. The visually rich displays of children's artwork throughout the school contribute to the strong learning ethos.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school's welcoming atmosphere and attention to detail ensure that arrangements for settling children into the nursery and transferring to the infants are exceptionally good. These help them to settle very quickly into well-established routines. The good level of attention to safety and children's well-being reassures parents that children are very safe and

valued. The academic guidance provided for children is good and helps them to understand how well they are doing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's leadership is exceptionally good and has been a key factor in ensuring that the school sustains a high reputation in the community. There is commitment to improvement, and a high priority is given to consulting and involving parents in the school. Under the headteacher's leadership, effective actions have been taken to introduce rigorous procedures to monitor performance and the quality of provision. Monitoring of teaching is now well established, and consequently, there is drive and commitment from all staff to improve provision. This is leading to further improvements as practice is regularly reviewed. Staff work together as a cohesive team and share the vision for inspiring children to learn effectively. Equality of opportunity for all children is therefore effective. Governance of the school is good. Governors have a range of expertise, which they use to work very closely with the school. However, more rigour is needed in the way in which they hold the school to account.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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	1
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

I really enjoyed the visit to your nursery school very much. It was a pleasure to talk to your parents about your enjoyment of going to the nursery and to see how happy you are when you are there.

Here are the things that are so good about your nursery school.

- Your parents believe that the nursery is good and does some brilliant things for you and I agree with them.
- You really enjoy your nursery because you are happy and safe.
- Your behaviour and attendance are brilliant.
- Your school gives you many exciting and fun things to do inside the classrooms and in the garden.
- You learn a lot at school and your teachers make sure that you know about the infants before you go there.
- Your teachers look after you very well.
- You enjoy eating lots of fruit and vegetables in school and doing the HAPPY exercise.
- Your teachers make sure that you do your best.
- Your headteacher and other grown ups look after the school very well.

Your school really wants you learn a lot more. This is how your teachers will help you to do better. When they watch you doing lots of exciting things in the garden or the classrooms they will:

- make sure that all of you join in the different activities
- keep a careful record of how well you are doing.

Thank you very much for being so welcoming and friendly when I visited your nursery.

I hope that you will always enjoy your time at the nursery.

Carmen Rodney

Lead inspector HMI