

Maples Children's Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101858
Local Authority	Ealing
Inspection number	286199
Inspection dates	18–19 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Bernice Magson

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	2–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Yoel Gordon
Headteacher	Ms Mia Ospovat
Date of previous school inspection	13 May 2002
School address	East Churchfield Road Acton London W3 7LL
Telephone number	020 8743 7128
Fax number	020 8749 1656

Age group	2–5
Inspection dates	18–19 October 2007
Inspection number	286199

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This Nursery School admits children to full or part-time education from a socially diverse area of Acton. The proportion of children speaking English as an additional language is above average. A small number of children have learning difficulties and disabilities, including some with complex needs. Additional services to support children and their families are available on the same site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The Nursery is a good school with some outstanding features. It provides children with a good start to their education. Under the guidance of an excellent headteacher, all children achieve well and standards are above those expected of children of nursery age.

Children receive excellent care and support. Staff value the contribution of each child and personal development is exceptional. Parents appreciate the 'peaceful and warm environment in which children thrive.' Children feel safe and secure and enjoy school very much. Each day they run into the classrooms happy and smiling, eager to participate in the wide range of learning experiences, which parents say are 'always different and interesting.' Relationships between children and with adults are outstanding. Children behave exceptionally well, and understand how to take care of themselves. They are developing an understanding of healthy lifestyles, and enjoy physical exercise. They help themselves to drinks and eat fruit daily. Children are developing an appreciation of their neighbourhood and community. In the garden, they peer excitedly into a tiny cupboard in a wooden sculpture to view an etched photograph of the park beyond the nursery fence.

The curriculum includes an excellent balance in adult-led and child-initiated play. Each day there are opportunities for discussion and exploration in all areas of learning, appropriate for children of nursery age. Teaching and learning are good. A cohesive staff team ensure that children with different backgrounds and different needs are challenged effectively in all activities. This is because staff know the children well and planning is thorough. Adults question individuals skilfully to sustain thinking and extend concentration. Key workers make a valuable contribution to the teaching, interacting well with individuals and role-modelling learning experiences skilfully. Assessment systems are in place, although not yet fully embedded and some inconsistencies exist in the quality of children's improvement targets.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has clarity in her vision for the direction of the school, ably supported by a new deputy. Staff and governors give loyal support. Management systems are efficient and well-established. Challenging targets are set, and procedures for checking on the school's performance are effective. However, the monitoring of provision by some leaders and managers is at an early stage of development and relies heavily on the headteacher. A recent review of roles and responsibilities has taken place to address this weakness. The school has a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

As a nursery school, the Foundation Stage is completely covered by the Overall Effectiveness section.

What the school should do to improve further

- Share the good practice of some staff to improve the quality of improvement targets.
- Strengthen the roles of staff and governors in strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children make good progress. From average starting points on entry, many reach standards above expected goals for their age by the time they leave the Nursery. Standards in physical and creative development are above those expected. Many children have a weakness in their reading and writing skills on entry and activities to raise standards are a key priority. As a result, most children are able to express their needs and ideas, and join enthusiastically in nursery rhymes and action songs. A group of children were seen engrossed in a story, and some more able children were using pencils and crayons to draw patterns and write their names. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well and attain their individual targets. Those children speaking English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers. They are well-integrated, and given sensitive support focused on their specific needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Parents strongly confirm that their children like school. Attendance is good. Although still early in the new term children have settled well and are confident learners. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Children understand about right and wrong and comply well with school rules. They play together amicably and share toys willingly. Children were seen to chat easily with friends and with adults. Behaviour is outstanding. Children are developing their awareness of their environment and its care. The Garden Project has encouraged children to care for plants and grow their own vegetables. Their excellent attitudes and competent basic skills prepare them well for their next stage of education and the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

All children have positive attitudes and are eager to improve. Teaching is effective, because of the excellent organisation of activities. Children's learning is rooted in good quality first-hand experiences. Teachers have a secure understanding of how each child learns. Their personal interests and ideas are extended well using a good range of teaching methods. There are good links between subjects. For example, after playing in the sand, children extended their art skills by designing flags to stand in the top of their sand castles. Creative activities are popular with children and there are good opportunities for them to use tools and equipment with care. Good support is provided for children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those speaking English as an additional language. Staff interact sensitively to encourage these children during both adult-led and child-initiated play.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school has an excellent curriculum that fully meets the needs of all children. There is a very good emphasis on the acquisition of personal and social skills. The curriculum builds effectively on children's prior attainment and experiences. Activities are adjusted each day to extend children's knowledge, understanding and skills. Both indoors and outside, classrooms are very well-organised and stimulate children's interests. Visitors enhance the curriculum very effectively.

A local artist has helped children to create the Maples mosaic and individual designs enhance the entrance and corridors. Parents cook traditional dishes to help with the celebration of religious festivals. Visits into the community, for example to Kew Gardens, are effective in developing children's knowledge of the wider world. The lending library of books and number games operates weekly and caters effectively for children in a multi-lingual school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides an outstanding level of care and support for children and their families. Staff have developed a warm and friendly environment in which all children feel valued. Procedures for child protection, risk assessment and health and safety are very thorough and effective. Links with outside agencies are good, and additional support for individuals is available, as necessary. The partnership with parents is strong and they play a full part in their child's early education. Parents commented on how they enjoy visiting classrooms or joining the school on visits out. Staff are judged as receptive to concerns about children and instrumental in overcoming any problems. New procedures are in place to observe, assess and report on children's progress, although these are not yet fully embedded. Some improvement targets are too broad and lack challenge.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is led very ably by an excellent headteacher. Under her guidance, the Nursery maintains good standards and provides a good quality of education. Leadership and management roles are shared with the recently appointed deputy and a cohesive leadership team is developing. The use of self-evaluation is good. Next steps in the school's development are identified appropriately and changes are introduced, based on sound financial management. However, monitoring of the school's performance and evaluation of any actions has not involved staff and governors sufficiently. Governors have undertaken recent training in order to develop their leadership roles. Staff roles are also developing to share the monitoring of provision more equitably.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	2

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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	3
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

1 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Maples Children's Centre, London, W3 7LL

Thank you for welcoming me to your Nursery. I enjoyed meeting you and seeing all the interesting things you are doing. I think that your garden area is wonderful. I liked looking at the pictures of the park, especially the one hidden inside the tiny cupboard. I think that you have a good school.

I liked these things about your school:

- you enjoy school very much and work hard in all activities
- the grown-ups give you lots of interesting things to do
- you are very good at all times
- the grown-ups take good care of you
- your parents and carers are glad that you come to this Nursery.

I have asked your headteacher and governors to make sure that staff know how your learning is to improve. Also, I think that the grown-ups could give more help to your headteacher to make your school even better.

I hope you continue to enjoy your time in the Nursery at Maples Children's Centre

Yours truly,

Bernice Magson

Lead Inspector