

# Oliver Thomas Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102706
<b>Local Authority</b>	Newham
<b>Inspection number</b>	286465
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sue Vale

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	156
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sarah Iles
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms M D Walls
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 June 2001
<b>School address</b>	Matthews Avenue East Ham London E6 6BU
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8552 1177
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8552 1832

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<b>Age group</b>	3–4
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Oliver Thomas Nursery School is situated in the London Borough of Newham. It has space for 180 part-time places. There are currently 156 children on roll of which approximately 27 attend full time. Of the 60 per cent of the children learning English as an Additional language the largest group is Tamil speaking. About 40 per cent of the children starting school have little or no English, and a further 20 per cent are in the early stages of learning English. Around a quarter of the children have learning difficulties or disabilities. The Nursery is extending its provision to become a children's centre.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Oliver Thomas Nursery is an outstanding school and children receive an excellent start to their education. The headteacher has a clear shared vision for the development of the Nursery and the needs of children are always put first. Governors make a strong contribution and are fully supportive of the Nursery's work and its development. As one Governor said, 'The Nursery acts on the individual needs of children.'

Children begin school with skills at levels below those expected for children of this age, particularly in communication language and literacy. Consistently high adult interaction with children, where teachers become part of the children's learning through, for example, role play, helps children to settle in quickly and make good progress. Consistently very good teaching and an interesting, varied curriculum, in which children are encouraged to be independent, also help children to achieve well. By the time they leave Nursery, they make good progress in their communication language and literacy, mathematical development, and physical development. They make exceptional progress in their personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding and creative development. Well planned practical activities allow children to develop their own interests and abilities independently. This provides them with a strong foundation for the next stage of their education.

Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. They are very happy and keen to be at Nursery, although attendance amongst some families does not always reflect this. A healthy lifestyle is encouraged and children are aware of the need to stay safe and healthy. The care, guidance and support provided for children are also outstanding. Children receive a positive start to their school life because the staff have a high commitment to meeting the needs of all. There are regular observations made of what children know and can do and these are celebrated in children's records of achievement.

The Nursery has maintained good standards since the last inspection, and it has outstanding capacity to improve still further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Encourage better attendance.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Children achieve well from a lower than expected starting point in personal social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. By the time they leave Nursery they reach expected standards in most areas of learning. They achieve above what is expected for their age in creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal social emotional development. This is because the school has high expectations of all children and teachers work very closely as a team to support children's individual needs. English as an additional language learners make good progress as a result of an emphasis placed on speaking and listening in the planned activities. Moreover, high quality bilingual support enables the children to fully access the activities on offer, develop confidence and progress to the next stage of learning. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities make good very gains in their emotional and social development as a result of individualised support provided by teachers.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The personal development of pupils is outstanding, as a result of the high quality of the care and guidance the school gives them. Their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well supported by special events, and an enriched curriculum. When they join the school, children quickly gain in confidence and clearly enjoy coming to school. They are eager to try to communicate and staff give them confidence in trying to speak English. Children are very well behaved. Their physical and healthy development is encouraged through a variety of play activities including the opportunity for some to attend, 'water awareness' sessions with their teachers and parents at the local swimming baths. Despite the Nursery explaining to parents the importance of children attending regularly, attendance is very low. Children look after each other and are very kind to each other. This is particularly enhanced by the outstanding work on transition arrangements which the Nursery has developed with local primary schools.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teaching and learning are outstanding. This is because teachers plan sessions and activities very well and incorporate a variety of learning styles. Teachers have a very good understanding of how young children learn and they make learning a fun activity. For example, children enjoy experimenting to see whether plastic and metal spoons float or sink. Instructions are given in English and Tamil so that those children who are learning English as an additional language have equal access to the activities on offer. The outdoor environment is used as a valuable resource in promoting learning and children are very happy to sample a wide range of activities to enhance their knowledge and understanding. Additional needs of children are identified at an early stage and excellent support provided, especially through the 'nurture programme' and the adaptation of sessions for the more able children. This results in children making good progress in their learning. Through classes the school supports parents in helping their children to succeed. For example, involving parents in sharing 'learning sacks' at home and encouraging them to participate in their children's learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is excellent and meets the individual needs of children very well. Enrichment activities such as visits to local shops are planned to enhance children's understanding of the local community and develop their economic well being. The curriculum and activities on offer change daily and the children are able to experience a wide and stimulating range of activities. This really helps them to make good progress in their learning. For example in a free choice activity children enjoyed playing African drums to the beat of recorded music. Teachers have weekly meetings to discuss and plan both indoor and outdoor learning opportunities for all children so that their individual needs and interests are catered for. In one activity in which children predicted whether cress seeds need sunshine to grow, the teachers challenged gifted and talented children's learning by evaluating their responses and moving them on to the next step in their learning.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

The quality of these aspects is outstanding. Teachers are very sensitive to the needs of children. Children 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 works extremely well with a wide range of outside agencies in order to support not just individual children but the whole family. This is a strength of the school, and is appreciated by parents. As one parent said, 'I have benefited as a parent by some of the courses offered for parents - carers.' Detailed risk assessments are carried out to ensure children's health and safety.

The school has 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 planning the next step of children's learning. Challenging targets are set for children and additional support is provided, for example through nurture groups and challenge for the more able and older children, which enables them to make good progress. Parents are really encouraged to be a positive part of their children's education.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

Leadership and management are excellent. Outstanding leadership by the head teacher has allowed the Nursery to progress well so that the overall effectiveness of the Nursery is excellent. The head teacher leads her team very well. She, along with the governing body, has a clear focused vision for the development of the school and there are very good procedures in place for the day-to-day management. The school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses is accurate albeit modest in some areas. A clear vision for the future of the school by the leadership team ensures that the school is rightly focused on the way forward for the best interests of the children in developing as a children's centre. Excellent work in the preparation for the children's next stage of education is a real strength of the Nursery. Children are very well prepared for their move to primary school. The governing body shares the vision of the head teacher in the involvement of the wider community. It is supportive of the drive to raise standards and is clear in its understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The governing body is very focussed on the development of the school as a central hub of the community which it serves, and this is why the school is in a strong position to continue to improve.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	1
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**

14 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Oliver Thomas Nursery School, Matthews Avenue, East Ham, London, E6 6BU

It was lovely to meet you when I came to visit your Nursery. I enjoyed watching you play music in the garden and the way you play in the 'virtual pond' area of the garden.

Oliver Thomas Nursery is a good school. There are lots of things which you do well.

- You are very happy and like coming to your Nursery.
- Some of you are very grown up and can do lots of things for yourselves.
- Those of you who are learning English as an additional language are supported very well.
- Your teachers are very good at helping you to learn new things.
- You are very good at making your own independent choices and your teachers help you to do this very well.
- There are lots of interesting things for you to try and have a go at, like the music playing and the assault course.
- You are looked after very well.

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.

Best wishes

Sue Vale  
Lead inspector