

# Selhurst Early Years Children's Centre

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131724
<b>Local Authority</b>	Croydon
<b>Inspection number</b>	315859
<b>Inspection date</b>	31 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Dawson

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2-5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	31
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Sarah Licordari
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Sue Hirschheimer (Acting)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 June 2002
<b>School address</b>	23 Dagnall Park South Norwood London SE25 5PL
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8684 3777
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8664 8223

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The early years centre caters for children aged two to five. The remit of the inspection is the education and care of children in the Foundation Stage - that is, the nursery for children aged three to five. Most children are from ethnic minority groups and a small minority has English as an additional language. The centre serves a disadvantaged area and provides many additional services, outside the scope of the inspection. The school prides itself on its links with parents and the community. It has Effective Early Learning (EEL) status and the Investors in Children award. The children enter the nursery in the September of the year they reach their fourth birthday but if there are spaces, some may move into the nursery the term after their third birthday. An acting headteacher has been in post for five terms.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Selhurst Early Years Centre provides children in the Foundation Stage with good education and care. The acting headteacher, supported by a consultant headteacher, has been successful in turning the centre round following a period of instability caused by several long-term staff sicknesses. The centre has outstanding liaison with, and support for, parents and carers. This, combined with good teaching, enables children to make good progress.

Children join the nursery with skills that are at or below national expectations for their age. Some move up from the small class of two-year-olds but most are new to school. They rapidly settle into school routines, becoming confident, independent and well behaved. This is a direct result of the centre's focus on children's personal, social and emotional development, addressing a dip in children's behaviour and attitudes in the last academic year because of the many changes of staff. As a result, children's personal, social and emotional skills are above expectations for three to four year olds. The staff take extremely good care of the children, gently guiding them towards a good understanding of right and wrong, social skills, and healthy and safe lifestyles. Every parent who responded to the questionnaire agreed that children enjoy school. One parent said, 'My child is always talking about school'.

Teachers provide the children with a good range of activities to promote learning across the curriculum. All adults question children effectively, encouraging them to reason and find things out. They have very good relationships with the children, often giving the impression of sharing in their learning. They make regular assessments of children's achievements, and children are extremely proud of their portfolios of work. Teachers' assessments are helpful in establishing the skills the children have at the beginning of their schooling. They are planning to use these records to help adapt the curriculum to meet children's needs more closely as their skills develop. However, apart from, personal, social and emotional development, assessments are rarely organised in a way that shows how well children achieve over time or precisely what they need to learn next. This prevents children becoming involved in planning how they will master new skills. Teachers plan to cover the Foundation Stage curriculum well, often enhancing learning with visits and visitors to school, as well as responding to the children's interests. This enables most children to make good progress, achieving well across all areas of learning.

The school is well led and managed. The acting headteacher swiftly identified areas for improvement. The plans for the development of the Children's Centre have been implemented effectively and the centre is on track to accommodate one-year-olds next year. These plans have already identified the need to improve assessment and the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. The attractive building is well organised and the centre is a valuable resource for the community. Staff are deployed very effectively, allowing, for example, the two teachers sharing the nursery to be in school together one day a week. This ensures continuity in planning and care. Parents and carers are delighted with the education and care the children receive. The senior management team, governors and staff are excited about the future for the centre and committed to continuous improvement. The potential for further improvement is good.

## 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

- Use the assessments of children's progress to more clearly identify the next steps in learning and provide additional challenge.
- Help children understand what they need to learn next so they can become responsible for selecting activities to support their needs.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Although children have only been in school for a short time they have made good progress overall. Their very good personal, social and emotional development provides a secure foundation for learning across the curriculum. Almost all children sustain concentration well, listening to stories and often showing empathy with the characters. One child said of a teddy, 'I think he's very angry'. Children are already well within the expected levels for their age in communication, language and literacy and enjoy 'mark making' as they develop writing skills. Although some do not have clear speech, all have a sound vocabulary and an awareness of language structure. The very few children who need additional support for English language are making good progress. Children's mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development are appropriate for their age. Computer skills are particularly well developed. Children's physical development is good because of the good outdoor provision and opportunities to use hand-held tools.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Children enter into the activities provided for them with enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment. They already tidy away neatly and safely, are aware of each other's space and take turns. They play amicably alongside each other and their good behaviour maintains a happy and secure learning environment. Children know that they have very different origins, but there is complete racial harmony throughout the centre. They know how to keep healthy and safe. All wash their hands before eating, although few know why. Although attendance is not compulsory, the vast majority of children rarely miss sessions. They already have a sense of community. They know that they have to post their name on the wall when they arrive, for example. Although most children sustain concentration well, they move randomly from activity to activity and are not yet selecting discriminately to enhance their skills.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The two nursery teachers, with the nursery officers, work and plan together very well to provide a good learning environment for the children. They have a good understanding of the way young children learn and are skilled in maintaining conversations with individuals to help deepen understanding. They are committed to developing children's enquiry and investigative skills, and activities are planned to provide the skills children need across the Foundation Stage curriculum. Children are encouraged to be independent and to use their initiative within the secure and caring environment. As a result, children have settled into school life extremely well. An initiative to track the progress of individual children's dispositions and attitudes last term

was very successful in identifying specific needs to plan activities to support them. Children's learning in this area has already been rapid this term. Teachers keep records of what children do across the curriculum. These do not yet identify progress towards learning goals or identify the next steps in learning as teachers are finding out what skills children already have. They plan to use the good tracking systems established for children's personal, social and emotional development across the curriculum to fine-tune their planning to meet individual needs.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The good quality resources are well organised to provide children with a wide range of activities to promote learning. The outside environment is particularly well planned and children have good access to activities outside throughout the day. Tools and equipment are available for children to access freely. Teachers plan theme weeks to make learning interesting. Some of these involve other organisations such as the school for creative arts. Additional activities, such as a music therapy, enhance the curriculum. The emphasis is on learning through activities, and this has been very successful in giving children a good start to their school life. The curriculum meets the requirements for nursery children at this stage of their learning well and it is adapted to accommodate children's interests. The curriculum does not yet fully accommodate all of the future needs of individual children because assessment procedures are not yet providing enough detail about precisely what children need to learn next.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The centre's pastoral care guidance and support for the children is exemplary. Very effective procedures for induction to the nursery and excellent communication with parents and carers ensure children experience very little trauma when starting school. Each child has a specific adult dedicated to his or her well-being and pastoral support. The centre fully meets the requirements for safeguarding children. Families are offered many opportunities for additional training and support and parents and carers often learn alongside their children. Although no children have been formally identified as having learning difficulties, the inclusion manager from the local authority visits regularly to assess children who are causing concern. Children with English as an additional language have good support from adults in the nursery and additional external support. Teachers place great emphasis on developing children's personal and social skills and give them extremely good guidance. Guidance for other areas of learning is less well developed. This misses opportunities to channel children's eagerness to learn towards specific goals so that they make even better progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The acting headteacher has calmly and determinedly tackled the issues the centre was facing when she joined the team. Because of the high cost of employing additional staff to cover staff absence and illness, the centre had a large debt. Through prudent management and staff deployment, the centre is now solvent. With the senior management team, she has totally eradicated incidences of poor behaviour amongst the children, generated by staff changes. The appointment of a successful teaching team, consisting of a new and an experienced teacher cemented these improvements. The headteacher monitors teaching and learning and the

outcomes provide targets for improvement and professional development. The deputy headteacher, who is responsible for the youngest children, has been fully involved in school development. Governors support the centre well and the chair is closely involved in the Drop in Centre for families as well as the provision for the children. She is newly appointed, and the previous chair of governors was fully involved in drawing up the centre's Improvement Plan. The centre intends to appoint a substantive headteacher next year, and governors have a very clear understanding of the requirements for good leadership.

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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?	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?	1
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 <sup>1</sup> 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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<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>	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	3
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	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 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Selhurst Early Years Children's Centre, London, SE25 5PL

It was lovely to meet you all when I visited you on Wednesday. Your happy, smiling faces made me want to smile too! Thank you very much for your friendliness and for letting me join you while you were busy. A special thanks to the children who left what they were doing to talk to me.

I could see how busy you all were. I really liked the way you talked to each other and your teachers. You are very good at taking turns and behave very well. Well done! You should be proud of yourselves and each other. I think you should be very proud of your teachers too. They take very good care of you and your families, and make sure you know how to take care of yourselves. They make sure you have lots of interesting things to do so that you can learn quickly. I know they enjoy playing with you too.

I have asked your teachers to make sure they know exactly how clever you are so that they can give you things to do to help you learn even better. I know how much you like to learn new things so I think your teachers should help you understand what you need to learn next. Then you can make sure you choose things to do that will help you to wow them with your cleverness. I know you are proud of what you do already. You will be even more proud of yourselves!

You have a lovely place to learn in. I especially like the way you can go outside during the day. You bravely try new things that help you to grow big and strong. You know how to take care of yourselves. The grown-ups who are in charge of the centre are good at making sure you have what you need to keep you safe and help you learn. I know they will make sure you carry on enjoying your learning in the nursery.

Best wishes

Judy Dawson (Lead inspector)