

Tachbrook Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101104
Local Authority	Westminster
Inspection number	323402
Inspection date	3 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Nicola Davies

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	58
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Margaret Legg
Headteacher	Ms Tess Robson
Date of previous school inspection	21 March 2006
School address	Aylesford Street London SW1V 3RT
Telephone number	020 7641 8725
Fax number	020 7641 8726

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how well children achieve, including children who are learning English as an additional language; and how staff maintain and improve the quality of learning for children and promote their welfare. Evidence was gathered from observations, the tracking of children's learning and development, parents' questionnaires and discussions with the headteacher, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is situated on Peabody Estate in Westminster. The school is ethnically and linguistically diverse. Nineteen different languages are currently used by children, a third of whom are learning English as an additional language. For most of these, Tachbrook is their first experience of an English-speaking environment. The school includes a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Twenty children attend all day, usually in the term before they move on to their next school. The other children attend either the morning or afternoon sessions.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Tachbrook is an outstanding Nursery which, in the words of one parent, gives its children 'a superb start to education'. Parents praise the 'attention to detail and meticulous planning' which ensures that each child's individual needs are very well met and opportunities for their learning are maximised. The outcome is children who are very happy, exceptionally involved in their activities, display very high levels of independence and achieve exceptionally well.

For most children, this is their first experience of education outside the home and their skills and experiences vary widely. Many of the children with English as an additional language are at the early stages of learning how to use English to communicate. A significant minority are unsure how to work cooperatively with others and find concentrating more difficult, while others demonstrate high levels of confidence and very good communication skills. The 'personalised' curriculum which staff develop for each child means that by the time they leave, nearly all children are reaching, and most are exceeding, the expectations for their age. This represents excellent achievement for all.

The way that staff continually adapt and improve the provision they make for children to learn and develop lies at the heart of much of its success. The environment for learning is first class and the quality of opportunities for children to learn in the delightful outdoor area is exceptional. Children pursue their own learning and interests independently as well as through carefully planned opportunities for them to benefit from adult support and guidance. Staff rightly place a great deal of emphasis on providing children with opportunities to learn at first hand through real experiences. On any one day these may include adventurous activities in the school's small wooded area, pond dipping, or growing vegetables in the allotment area. Similarly, indoor activities may include experimenting with sounds and instruments alongside a professional musician, building a rail network collaboratively with other children or extending their understanding of stories and text through the sharing and retelling of stories of the Russian witch Baba Yaga.

A further strength of the outstanding curriculum is the use made of the local area. For example, individual opportunities to visit shops, markets, or art galleries with staff are carefully planned into the learning programmes of individual children. Such activities support the school's good contribution to community cohesion and this exceptionally rich curriculum, coupled with excellent teaching from knowledgeable adults, powerfully promotes learning. Children are encouraged to play an active role in their own learning. Staff regard the development of 'autonomous, active learners with strong self-esteem and a positive and can-do disposition' as key to their work. As a result, children are self-motivated and show a very high degree of confidence, independence and concentration in their activities while relating very well to each other and to adults. For example, during the inspection children took adults' messages about how to pond dip safely to heart and advised one of the inspectors on how to make changes to her behaviour so that she too was safe. This excellent awareness of safety on children's parts is matched by procedures and practices of all staff, who ensure that children are protected and secure at all times. The promotion of children's welfare includes full compliance with all the relevant government requirements and extends beyond this to include the very careful planning to meet children's social, emotional and developmental needs. This was greatly praised by parents, one describing it as provision which is 'completely tailored' to her child's needs. This 'tailoring' includes support for children at key points such as when they first join the school, if they experience a change in family circumstances or as they prepare to leave for their next

school. It encompasses fruitful relationships with other professionals and agencies, so that adults work together very well in the interests of the children.

The school is exceptionally well led by the headteacher. Leaders and managers have very good procedures to maintain and improve the quality of children's experiences. After each session, staff review the learning of children across the activities. This discussion helps them enhance activities for the following session. It also highlights children who may need encouragement or support to extend their learning in certain areas. These meetings help staff to share their own professional expertise and to gather evidence for suggesting ways they may continue to improve what they offer.

The quality of these daily discussions is matched by strong processes for school self-evaluation. Recent improvements have included a thorough review of how children develop their mathematical skills. One finding was that recording children's progress in numeracy was not as detailed as in other areas. The school has successfully addressed this through further professional development for staff and has already seen a pleasing impact on children's learning. A further outcome has been the development of new 'maths play packs' for children and their families. Staff have been working on approaches to accelerate the progress of some children learning English as an additional language. One successful approach has been to extend their experiences and provide focused opportunities for them to talk about these with adults. The school is also planning how it can make the most of children's knowledge of languages other than English. Such a strong cycle of review and improvement means that the school has an outstanding capacity to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Enhance opportunities for staff to share understanding of bilingual children's first and additional language development.

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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 is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
The standards[1] reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which 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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

16 March 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Tachbrook Nursery School, London, SW1V 3RT

Your parents told us how much you love going to your excellent Nursery school and we loved visiting you too. Thank you for talking to us and showing us what you were doing.

We are not surprised that you have so many visitors. They come to look at:

- all the different ways you play and learn
- how the adults look after you and help you
- the fantastic work that you do
- how happy and confident you are.

The adults want to find out more about all the languages you can speak. This is a good idea.

Well done to you and all the adults.

Yours faithfully

Nicola Davies

Lead Inspector