

James Lee Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100317
Local Authority	Hammersmith and Fulham
Inspection number	335519
Inspection dates	26–27 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Natalia Power

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 of pupils on the school roll	74
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gill Dickenson
Headteacher	Marlene Slack
Date of previous school inspection	0 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed the open-plan provision for a total of around three hours, and talked to governors, staff and parents. They talked with the children, observed the school's work, and looked at the school's tracking of children's progress, the school development plan, minutes of the governing body, curricular planning and the 58 questionnaires submitted by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the quality of learning and the progress made by different groups of children, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English
- the school's progress in responding to the points for improvement made in the last inspection
- the quality of the school's promotion of community cohesion and the extent to which it evaluates the impact of its measures.

Information about the school

Of the 76 children on the school's roll, 42 attend all day and the rest either in the morning or in the afternoon. There is also an after-school club for up to 16 children, which is managed by the governing body. The children transfer to a wide range of schools for the Reception Year. Children come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, with children from White British and other White backgrounds forming the largest groups. Over half of children speak first languages other than English, primarily Arabic and French, and most of these are at an early stage of learning English. A very small minority of children have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Of these, children with speech, language and communication difficulties form the largest group.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

The school provides an outstanding quality of education.

- All groups of children, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, those at an early stage of learning English and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, thoroughly enjoy their learning and achieve exceptionally well. This is because their progress is tracked highly effectively, and the information is used extremely well to support their needs.
- Children become independent learners and this helps them concentrate on the task in hand and gain in maturity.
- Adults extend children's learning through well-targeted questioning and support, based on accurate observation and a full understanding of children's progress. This enables adults to provide children with a high level of challenge.
- Children love going to school, and this is seen in their high attendance.
- Children develop excellent personal qualities because the adults encourage their independence. They are happy and behave exceptionally well, taking turns and considering the needs of others.
- The children are extremely safe in school. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and this helps them regard nature with a sense of wonder and awe.
- There is a wealth of exciting and enriching tasks both indoors and outdoors, and these extend children's learning fully. The curriculum has a very strong focus on basic literacy and numeracy, and also provides exciting enrichment activities. These opportunities are also offered to children who stay on to attend the excellent after-school club.
- The care and support offered to all children, including the most vulnerable and those with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, are outstanding. The excellent partnerships with external agencies benefit these children, and those with speech, language and communication difficulties are given outstanding specialist support.
- Leaders and managers ensure that safeguarding procedures are stringent.
- The school promotes community cohesion well, ensuring that children have a good understanding of other people's faiths and cultures. However, leaders and governors do not sufficiently evaluate the impact of the measures taken, to ensure that children learn as much as they possibly can about the wider world.
- The headteacher provides remarkable leadership. She is highly ambitious for the school, and she and her team have put in place systems which have improved the school in all the areas identified for improvement in the last inspection.

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- Leaders, managers and governors have an excellent understanding of their school and plan extremely well for the future. As a result, the school has an excellent capacity to continue to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the school's good promotion of community cohesion is rigorously evaluated by governors and leaders and managers.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children**1**

'My child has come on in leaps and bounds.' This comment from one parent is representative of many which pay tribute to the outstanding progress made by the children in their learning. The children enter the Nursery with varied but generally average skills and aptitudes and, by the time they leave, all have made significant progress in their learning, attaining highly. The reasons for their outstanding achievement and enjoyment are, in the words of another parent, 'the constant pursuit of excellence, especially in creativity, stimulation and genuine engagement of the teachers'. In lessons observed, adults took every opportunity to extend the children's learning through thoughtful and well targeted questions. In one excellent activity, for example, a child was trusted to use a camera, which he did in a mature and sensible way to record a group activity, and the adult's gentle but challenging questioning extended the child's understanding of how the camera worked and also what had been learnt in the activity. Children also learn exceptional skills through taking responsibility for themselves and for others. For example, in laying the table for one another, children learn to recognise one another's name labels as well as where to place cutlery and crockery.

Children feel exceptionally safe because the environment is so well protected. They are considerate to one another. When one child accidentally bumped into another, the adult ensured that both children understood the need to take account of one another; tears were quickly dried and both children learned a valuable lesson in give and take. Children understand the importance of a healthy diet through being encouraged to taste such healthy foods as sushi which they themselves prepared with the help of a parent. They have access to excellent physical activities through digging the garden and playing on the many well designed climbing frames. There is real adventure in these children's lives, in a safe context, with adults keeping a watchful eye on them. The after-school club also has a strong focus on health, and children enjoy eating wholemeal toast and drinking milk, and then using the school's excellent facilities to promote physical exercise.

In this safe and supportive environment, children develop excellent personal qualities. Children from all backgrounds play well together. They behave exceptionally well, and are ready to share and take turns. An important reason for this is their exceptional powers of concentration due to the independence they are given. Children have excellent opportunities to contribute to their own school and to the wider community.

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For example, one child designed a building which another child made out of wooden blocks. The adults listen carefully to children's views and take them into account when planning activities. As a result, children are thoughtful about their choice of activities, concentrating exceptionally well on each task and seeing it through to completion. The school caters exceptionally well for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They learn to celebrate the values and traditions of others, for example by participating in a range of religious ceremonies. They also learn a respect for nature through caring for stick insects and watching chicks hatch from eggs. The grounding children gain in language and number skills prepares them exceptionally well for the next stage in their schooling.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Children's attainment ¹	1
The quality of children's learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
Children's behaviour	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Children's attendance ¹	1
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The school's ethos of promoting children's independent learning is shared by all the highly trained and experienced staff. As a result, children develop real maturity. Children in the 'workshop' areas choose what they will make and practise fine motor skills in

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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cutting, sticking and colouring until the object is completed and made to their satisfaction. As a result, children work quietly, sticking at tasks until they are completed. Adults use a variety of opportunities to extend the quality of children's learning by providing them with an exceptionally wide range of experiences. For example, children collaborated on a set of activities around role-playing a journey on a tube train. They made the train with chairs and a climbing frame, and one child took responsibility for 'driving' it. The adults extended the children's learning through teaching them to read an underground map and promoted their mathematical skills through selling them tickets. Children who do not speak English as their first language are taught exceptionally well by specialists who use games and jigsaws to widen their vocabulary and encourage them to feel part of a group. Questioning is used exceptionally well by all adults to increase the level of challenge for all groups of children to ensure that they learn as much as possible. For example, one child with speech, language and communication difficulties was encouraged to develop excellent language skills by talking about the pictures in his favourite book. The level of challenge is extremely high because the school carefully and rigorously collects information on the progress of each child, and then uses this information to provide activities which bring out the best in each.

The hallmark of the curriculum is its impressive variety. There is an enormous wealth of activities, with opportunities for developing all six areas of learning both indoors and in the stimulating outdoor play areas. These activities are carefully thought out to make learning as creative and wide-ranging as possible. For example, what appeared at first sight to be a simple activity with children sitting at a table drinking tea and eating biscuits was actually part of a complex range of learning experiences. The children had baked the biscuits the previous day. They were learning to taste different types of tea. They learned good table manners through using proper china, sitting together and passing items to one another. The teacher extended their vocabulary through well chosen questions. The adults then continued the tea-party theme by reading related stories to develop children's language skills further. The curriculum is enhanced by valuable and exciting trips to local places of interest, together with visits from drama groups and outside speakers. Computers are used exceptionally well to give children important new skills and to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

Children quickly settle into the school because of the exemplary care they receive from all the adults. New children quickly gain confidence and join in activities, because there is such a wealth of exciting things to do and so many dedicated adults looking after them that they don't have time for tears. All groups of children achieve outstandingly well because their needs are fully met. Vulnerable children are given excellent support. Children with speech, language and communication difficulties are given excellent specialist support and make similar progress to others. This is also the case for children at an early stage of learning English. When the time comes for the children to move to the next stage of their education, they are prepared extremely well through highly effective transition arrangements.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

In one of many enthusiastic comments on the leadership of the school made by parents and carers, the headteacher is described as 'extraordinary'. She works tirelessly to maintain exceptionally high standards and, in her own words, 'To strive for excellence in everything.' As a result of her ambition and drive for improvement, the school is stronger and more cohesive than at the time of the last inspection. She and her team have improved the quality of teaching and learning, so that it is now consistently excellent. In addition, they have strengthened the school's tracking of children's progress to ensure that all children receive work which challenges and excites them. There is a common sense of purpose among all the adults, and the school promotes equality of opportunity exceptionally well, enabling all children to succeed. Leaders, managers and governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are robust and of the highest quality.

Governors, leaders and managers have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths. Governors provide outstanding support. They are fully engaged in the life of the school and share the leadership's high standards and determination to maintain the school's exceptional qualities. The school promotes community cohesion well, ensuring that the children understand other people's faiths and cultures. As yet, school leaders do not sufficiently evaluate the considerable work which the school does to promote children's understanding of other people's faiths and cultures, but plans are in hand to improve the rigour of its evaluation of these activities. Leaders and managers work in extremely effective partnership with parents, keeping them fully informed about their children's progress and encouraging them to bring their skills to the school community. There are also excellent partnerships with external specialists such as therapy services to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and to provide family support when needed.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1 1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

A large majority of parents and carers returned questionnaires. This reflects the high regard in which the school is held by parents and carers. All those who returned questionnaires or who spoke to the inspection team commented that their children enjoy school, feel safe and make progress. Inspectors fully endorse these views. A few expressed minor concerns about the school. There was no specific trend or pattern to these issues.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at James Lee Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 76 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	90	6	10	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	79	11	19	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	34	59	21	36	3	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	64	21	36	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	69	18	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	62	19	33	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	66	17	29	2	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	40	69	14	24	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	66	20	34	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	59	19	33	3	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	59	23	40	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	44	76	14	24	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	81	11	19	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its children. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well children acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



30 November 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of James Lee Nursery School, London W14 9BH

Do you remember when two visitors came to your school to watch you play and learn? We had a wonderful time at your school, and this is what we found.

- You are lucky to go to an excellent school.
- You are all really happy at your school. This is because you get on so well with one another, and always share and take turns.
- Your school keeps you very safe, and you have many chances to eat healthily and take exercise. All the adults take really good care of you.
- You think of the needs of others, for example when you carefully lay the table for the other children.
- You enjoy learning indoors and outdoors. You have many exciting things to do. You love the chance to dig the garden, and watch plants and animals.
- You learn an amazing amount for children of your age, and this is because the adults watch over you and encourage you to do as much as you can for yourselves. We were impressed by how you stick at tasks until they are done.
- The adults love teaching you, and your parents and carers love the school almost as much as you do!
- The adults in charge do their very best to make your school as good as it can possibly be. We have asked them to make just one thing better, and that is to keep a closer watch on all the things they are doing to help you learn about people from other faiths and cultures. That way, all the adults can be sure that you are learning all about other people's ways of life.
- Even though you are very young, you can still do your bit to help your school by being as helpful as you can to one another.

We wish you all the best in your journey through life.

Yours sincerely

Natalia Power

Lead inspector

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