

Mary Paterson Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101106
Local Authority	Westminster
Inspection number	335657
Inspection dates	26–27 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Jo Curd

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	2–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fiona Weinbren & Jenny Marshall
Headteacher	Sylvie Gambell
Date of previous school inspection	24 May 2007
School address	13 Riverton Close London W9 3DS
Telephone number	020 76415804
Fax number	0
Email address	head.mpns.westminster@lgfl.net

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Thirteen opportunities for learning were observed involving all 12 members of staff who work directly with the children. Inspectors spoke to parents, carers, children, governors and staff. They observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement plan, activity planning, assessment records, reports from an external consultant and 44 parental questionnaires.

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

- outcomes for all groups of children over the past three years
- the extent of improvements or developments since the last inspection including the quality of governance
- the effectiveness of leadership and management and their understanding of Ofsted requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the effectiveness of all aspects of safeguarding.

Information about the school

The nursery is situated on the ground floor of a building and as lead setting of the Harrow road children centre also contains a 'drop in' on the first floor as well as an office for outreach and Job Centre+ workers. The nursery is lead agency for the children's centre and all it offers. This provision, including a holiday club, is due to be inspected at another time. The nursery takes children aged from two years, but most are three to five years old. Children come from a very wide range of ethnic and social backgrounds. Over half the children are at early stages of learning English. The majority of these have Arabic, Bengali or French as their first language. A small minority of families are refugees or asylum seekers. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational need and profound needs is higher than in most other nurseries. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals is higher than in most other schools. The school has 'Forest School' status. The school shares its governing body with another local nursery and children's centre. Most of the governors are relatively new to this.

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

All the children make exceptional progress in this nursery school due to excellent teaching, extremely broad opportunities for learning and very high levels of care. Almost all the staff have been at the school for many years and are highly committed to children's learning, development and well-being. They fully recognise the needs of families as imperative to this and are highly successful in supporting and engaging parents and carers too. Parents are extremely positive about the nursery and appreciate what a wonderful place it is for their children. All of those spoken to during the inspection or who responded to the inspection questionnaire were unanimous in their support of all the nursery offers. One expressed these views by saying 'Mary Paterson is an excellent nursery. Our daughter has truly blossomed here. The staff have been so caring and sensitive towards her and have provided an environment that is very stimulating but also very safe and reassuring.'

The nursery is extremely well organised to maximise children's interests, engagement and independence. Resources are very attractive and accessible. Children find, get out and use what they need, including tissues, drinks and a very wide range of games and equipment. Imaginative role play is given a high priority allowing lots of space, resources and very varied opportunities. Children play and work outside in all weathers, benefiting hugely from the very well planned, secure garden. They grow vegetables, play on a range of climbing equipment and, with the help and safe supervision of staff, use fires to heat and cook food and drinks. Children develop excellent attitudes to safety as they use a very wide range of tools in such a wide range of activities, learning to take risks safely. Extensive opportunities within the nursery are supplemented by numerous visits out including theatres, art galleries, museums and trips to the wood for 'Forest School'. All of which are carefully and effectively planned to extend the learning and development of all.

Leaders and managers are very good at identifying the skills and talents of staff and helping them to pursue and develop their particular interests. This has contributed highly effectively to excellent teaching, curriculum and care. Formal discussions by all the staff at the beginning and end of each day help them to focus very successfully on children's learning and how they can support and adapt what they offer to meet this. For example, helping children to make books about their experiences or take photographs of things that interest them.

Leaders know the nursery extremely well and are highly effective in using sharp and accurate evaluation to embed ambition and drive improvement. They have gone from strength to strength since the last inspection, introducing Forest School and developing their role as lead setting for the children's centre. Some governors are not as well

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informed as they might be because leaders do not always routinely record their monitoring and evaluation to share with governors.

Given the nursery's excellent track record and the highly ambitious and successful way leaders drive improvement and change, their capacity for sustained improvement is excellent.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the frequency and detail of recorded monitoring outcomes and governors' evaluation of these to ensure that outstanding achievement of all groups is maintained.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

1

All the children are making exceptional progress in their learning and development. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported extremely well and most make remarkable strides in their confidence, communication, ability to mix with others and show interest in the world around them. Some, with particularly profound needs, benefit greatly from individual personalised programmes and support. Children at early stages of learning English settle quickly because of well placed support in their home languages and effective use of visual and practical activities, delivered skilfully by caring, sensitive staff. Those who learn more quickly or easily are stretched and challenged by challenging, open-ended activities such as making and writing cards, story telling and drama. Children's individual interests and strengths are built upon and extended and weaker areas are effectively supported and nurtured. Any gaps in attainment and experience of different groups, including boys, girls and those who speak English as an additional language, narrow quickly over the year.

Children make excellent progress in all six areas of learning. Opportunities for learning and development are maximised as staff carefully plan activities which span various areas of learning. One example of this, seen during the inspection, was a week-long focus on water activities where children threw wet sponges at differently numbered targets, built huge runways for water, investigated the effect of water on different materials and made lemonade to enjoy at a big picnic and water fight at the park at the end of the week. Very engaging and interesting activities also contribute significantly to children's outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Experiences of whittling wood, rolling down hills and carefully watching insects during 'Forest School' are all valuable examples of this.

Children develop very positive attitudes to health, knowing how good fruit, vegetables and exercise are for them and all cleaning their teeth after lunch. They remain vulnerable to illness, however, and although punctuality is good attendance is satisfactory overall. They contribute very well to their school and local community through suggesting activities, finding resources, helping to tidy up and raising money for charity. Behaviour is excellent. Children are confident, independent and highly engaged in learning. They are extremely well prepared for later life because they have such

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positive attitudes, get on well with a very diverse range of other people and are very well grounded in all six areas of learning.

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	2
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	3
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The nursery's excellent, broad, relevant and very practical curriculum underpins the outstanding progress which all children make. Very strong and effective partnerships with others, such as the organisers of 'Forest School', visiting specialist teachers, health professionals and staff at museums and galleries, also contribute significantly to this. Children's comments about 'Forest School' and a recent drama project show just how much these experiences help their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, exploring emotions such as wonder, joy and fear through the Russian folk tale of 'Baba Yaga', experiencing the wonders of nature first hand in the woods and deep problem solving to retrieve a camera which had accidentally been dropped down a badger's hole.

Strong positive relationships are quickly established with children and families through

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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baby and toddler groups run at the nursery and visits which staff make to all the children's homes. These are successfully extended through frequent observations which staff make of all the children and daily discussions by all staff. Staff have also worked highly effectively to reduce and remove some cultural barriers to learning, for example working with parents to show the value of outdoor play in all weathers. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are cared for extremely well and activities are well tailored to meet various learning and developmental needs. Individual programmes including visual choice boards and specialised schemes are particularly helpful for some.

Teaching is highly effective because staff are so very well focused on individual learning and development. Relationships are extremely warm and supportive. Staff have a very good understanding of young children and are extremely imaginative in what they offer. Teamwork is excellent, morale is very high and staff are extremely well deployed.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	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?

Leaders and managers focus strongly on improving provision and opportunities for all the children. They have been highly effective in embedding ambition and driving improvement. The nursery has developed extremely well since its last inspection. All the staff share a strong and well-focused vision for provision and outcomes. Visits by all the staff to Norway and Sweden to develop this have been highly instrumental and conducive, especially in developing 'Forest School'. Daily discussions by all staff effectively focus teaching and support to meet individual children's needs and ensure that activities are extremely well tailored to these. The way the nursery promotes equal opportunities is outstanding. All the children are valued highly, provision is carefully and successfully planned to meet individual needs, gaps between different groups such as boys and girls are narrowing and outcomes for all are excellent.

Leaders and managers have a very accurate view of the nursery. They use this very effectively to drive further improvement and change. They do not always record all their monitoring, however, and evaluation, especially by governors, is not always as detailed as it could be. Policies and procedures to safeguard the health and safety of children are an example of this. Although they are thorough and robust, governors are not yet as strategically involved in questioning and developing them as they could be and

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arrangements are therefore good rather than outstanding.

Excellent partnerships with others contribute significantly to very broad opportunities and children's excellent attitudes to health and safety. Relationships with, and engagement of, parents and carers are outstanding. Daily communication between parents and carers and children's 'family workers' is warm, supportive and used very well to adapt activities and meet needs as they arise. Assessment records are always available and parents and carers contribute photographs and comments of children's experiences at home.

The nursery's contribution to community cohesion is strong but not yet fully evaluated. Leaders, managers and staff have a very good understanding of the local community and are successfully implementing well-developed plans and roles, including leadership on international early education councils, leading the local children's centre and bringing a very wide diversity of families together in an extremely positive and harmonious way. Given all these very positive aspects of the nursery and how very well it provides for each of the children, value for money is excellent.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	2
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

Parents and carers of nearly three quarters of the children responded to the questionnaire. In addition many parents and carers were spoken to during the inspection. All of these were unanimous in their appreciation of all that the nursery

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offers. No negative comments or queries were received. The most positive written response related to parents' and carers' satisfaction with their child's experience at the nursery. The majority of parents and carers spoken to were particularly appreciative of all the staff and the way they cared for their child. Inspection findings support these views and ratify this extremely positive response.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Mary Paterson 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 44 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 60 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	84	6	14	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	75	11	25	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	80	8	18	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	70	13	30	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	77	9	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	73	12	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	68	14	32	0	0	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)	32	73	11	25	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	68	14	32	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	73	10	23	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	64	16	36	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	82	8	18	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	93	3	7	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



29 May 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Mary Paterson Nursery School, Westminster, London W9 3DS

Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming when we visited your nursery recently. Thank you especially to those of you who looked after us at lunchtime and to those who cleared away our plates. It was wonderful to see some of the many very exciting and interesting things you do during your time there. We were sorry that we could not attend your big picnic and water play in the park and hope that it all went very well.

We agree with you and your parents and carers that Mary Paterson is an extremely good nursery. We think that you are all learning such a lot and are all developing extremely well. We were very impressed with your behaviour, confidence, independence and excellent attitudes to safety and health. We could see that you are all looked after and supported very well. Teaching is very good because the staff are very well trained and experienced and spend time at the beginning and end of each day thinking about and planning ways to make activities even better for you all.

Leaders know the nursery extremely well but do not always write all these things down. This sometimes makes it difficult for governors, especially the many who are quite new, to ask all the questions they could and to be quite as involved as they might be. We have therefore asked leaders to write down more of the things they know about the nursery so that governors can share this understanding, ask even more questions and make sure that you all continue to do as well as you can.

Perhaps you could help by being friendly and helpful to all the governors when they visit and telling them about all that you are doing and learning.

With best wishes to you and your families.

Yours sincerely

Jo Curd

Lead inspector

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