

# Moss Hall Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101253
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	335686
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 September 2009
<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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	71
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Councillor Brian Salinger
<b>Headteacher</b>	Perina Holness
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	189 Nether Street Finchley N3 1NR
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited all morning and afternoon sessions viewing 7 lessons, and held meetings with the chair of governors, staff and spoke to children and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at the data the school has collected on different groups of children's progress, the school improvement plan, 47 parent questionnaires, and procedures for keeping children safe.

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

- provision for children who are new to learning English
- the progress that children make in their learning
- the robustness of safeguarding procedures.

## Information about the school

Moss Hall Nursery School is housed in a spacious detached Victorian house set out over two floors, with considerable outdoor space. The nursery draws its children from a diverse range of cultural and social backgrounds. There is a full range of abilities of children entering the nursery, some are very young and they enter the nursery just after their third birthday. Around two thirds of the children speak a language other than English and altogether approximately 33 different languages are spoken. The school provides full and part time provision. The majority of children transfer to the adjoining infant school. At the time of the inspection not all children had started and for some it was only their first or second time attending.

**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

Moss Hall Nursery provides a good start to children's education. There are some outstanding aspects to this nursery provision. Children make good and in some instances outstanding progress from below expected starting points.

There are outstanding links with children's families and the wider community. Parents are very positive in their comments about the nursery.

Children are well prepared for the next steps in their learning through good teaching and an outstanding, stimulating curriculum. This particularly supports those children who are new to learning English.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children is outstanding. The provision for children with special educational needs and those with disabilities is also excellent. Children's behaviour is exemplary. Healthy lifestyles are adopted extremely well and children participate in ensuring that healthy fruit snacks are available throughout the day.

Teaching is good and very well supported by outstanding assessment procedures. This ensures that all children make at least good progress in their learning and in developing new skills. Children are cared for very well and they receive excellent guidance and support. Equality of opportunities and the way that the nursery promotes community cohesion are equally outstanding.

Leadership and management are excellent and drive the nursery forward. The governing body supports the school well and acts as a critical friend. Self-evaluation is accurate. Acting on the findings from the previous Ofsted inspection, the nursery has analysed the progress and achievement of all its pupils including any differences between different groups of children. This is good practice and has shown that there are no major differences between the progress made between different groups of children. However, it does show that in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy boys do not achieve as well as girls. This is an area which the nursery intends to work on improving over the year. The nursery offers good value for money. Consequently, the nursery clearly demonstrates that it has the capacity to sustain the excellent rate of improvement evident since its last inspection.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Lessen the gap between boys' and girls' attainment, particularly in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy.

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

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

**1**

Children make good and in a number of instances outstanding progress in their learning. The stimulating learning environment ensures that children are really keen to learn, are highly motivated to try out new things. They are enthralled by some of the activities on offer, such as the first time they play with the shaving foam or find the dinosaurs in the water fountain. Children are actively encouraged to make decisions for themselves about what they want to play with which promotes their independence?. On a number of occasions during the inspection children were totally absorbed in their learning. For example, this was seen when three children showed high levels of concentration whilst experimenting with wood to find the best way to hammer nails in.

A large number of children start at the nursery with skills particularly in speaking, and language skills, problem solving and numeracy which are below those expected for their age. In the time that they are at school many make good progress and almost half make exceptional progress in all areas of learning, so that by the time they leave children are achieving beyond the expected level for their age. Summer-born children, equating to a third of last year’s cohort, achieved equally as well as their peers which is unusual. Boys did not achieve quite as well as the girls did in their problem solving and numeracy development. The nursery is aware of this and is acting to close the attainment gap. Teachers are careful to consider the needs of different groups of pupils, such as the increasing numbers who are new to learning English as an additional language. All activities support all children well in developing new words and phrases, including those new to English. This helps focus the work of additional staff at the nursery. It ensures that different groups of pupils, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make equally good progress as their peers. All children are therefore well prepared for the next steps in their learning. Overall, attendance is good reflecting the children’s keenness to learn and their enjoyment of learning.

*These are the grades for children's outcomes*

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of children's learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1

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

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b>	
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The extent to which children feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Children's behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> Taking into account: Children's attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>2</b>
	2
<b>The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

### How effective is the provision?

The inspection confirmed the nursery's view that the quality of teaching overall is good with some outstanding features. All adults manage the children extremely well, and have well-established routines that help the children to settle in really quickly. It is commendable that at the time of the inspection for the majority of children it was only their first or second day in school and yet they were keen, eager, and happy to learn and already showing signs of independence. The calm, purposeful caring atmosphere along with the stimulating curriculum and varied and exciting activities on offer ensure that children settle rapidly into their new environment. However, adults' interaction with children does vary. Some teachers have excellent skills in the way they question children and help develop new vocabulary and understanding about what they are doing. Occasionally, the inspectors noted that some questioning used by teachers was slightly closed and only allowed children to give monosyllabic answers. Whilst there are occasions when this is relevant to the task in hand, there were some missed opportunities to develop children's awareness of the spoken language.

Teachers are experienced and skilled in providing challenges for pupils of different levels of ability. They carry out regular observations of individual children and discuss their interests and needs to ensure that planning, and the next steps for learning, are fully integrated and embedded into the curriculum. Their assessment of children's knowledge, skills and understanding is excellent. The increasing numbers who are new to learning English are well catered for. The totally inclusive environment, the exciting resources and activities on offer ensure that there are a range of activities which interest and engage all children thoroughly in their learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>2</b>
	1

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership and management of the nursery inspire a united team who have a strong sense of purpose in helping all children to achieve to the best of their abilities. This is central to all that the school does and is something that parents are particularly pleased about. Morale amongst the staff is high. The school regularly reviews its current practice and is not complacent in ensuring that it strives to achieve the best for the children in its care. Capacity for continuous improvement is strong. Governance is fully supportive. Governors fulfil their statutory duties well and many have been connected with the nursery for a number of years, bringing a good knowledge and sense of stability to the leadership and management. Safeguarding procedures are adhered to and are robust. There are excellent links with a variety of other agencies. The school community is very cohesive and the involvement of families and the local community in the school's work is outstanding, a view reflected by parents and governors alike. The promotion of equality of opportunity is also a key strength. Consequently, the children are happy and feel safe and secure. There are very good links with the receiving school which most children move on to, and there are good links with a local private infant school. Specialist help is called upon when needed to support children. As a result, the quality of teaching is at least good and leaders are fully aware of what needs to be done to drive further improvement. This is a major reason why children achieve as well as they do.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

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<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>
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2
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## Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents have very positive views about the nursery. Many expressed similar sentiments to the following comment made by one mother, 'We really love this nursery; it is a warm, loving and caring environment.' And, as another said, 'Staff have a very caring and natural approach, they show an active interest in every individual child.' All parents felt that their children really enjoyed school and were kept safe and healthy. Many sought out the lead inspector to express their happiness that their child was at the nursery, and how much their children enjoyed being there. A few parents wrote to the inspector expressing their concern that the inspection was taking place so early in the school year when for many children it was only their first or second day attending.



### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Moss Hall Nursery 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 47 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 71 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	83	6	13	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	35	75	11	23	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	64	12	26	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	60	14	30	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	72	10	21	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	62	13	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	70	10	21	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)	27	58	14	30	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	55	15	32	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	60	13	28	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	62	15	32	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	31	66	12	26	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	77	10	21	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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



17 September 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Moss Hall Nursery School, Finchley N3 1NR

Thank you so much for allowing us to visit your nursery. It is a lovely place to be. I really liked some of the activities that you do. It was fun playing in your lovely garden and I enjoyed meeting some of you when you were playing with the dinosaurs in the water fountain.

Some of the activities you do are very exciting and I wanted to join in lots of them, like discovering what was inside the boxes in the hallway and digging in the sand in your huge sand pit!

I agree with your parents that you go to an outstanding nursery. You all make good, and in some instances outstanding, progress from when you first start. There are outstanding links between the nursery, your families and the wider community. You learn a lot and are well prepared for the next steps in your learning. This is because of the good teaching and an outstanding, stimulating curriculum. All of you behave very well especially those of you who stay for lunch. I saw you helping to prepare and then eat your healthy fruit snacks which are available throughout the day.

You are cared for very well and there is excellent guidance and support. Sometimes the boys do not do as well as the girls when they are problem solving, working things out or using numbers. This is an area which your nursery intends to work on improving over the year.

I hope that you continue to enjoy the fun things that there are to do and that you have a really good year.

Yours faithfully

Sue Vale

Lead inspector

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