

# Curzon Crescent Children's Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101489
<b>Local Authority</b>	Brent
<b>Inspection number</b>	335728
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 December 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alison Storey HMI

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>	103
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Bunmi Osaghae
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Wendy Yianni
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Curzon Crescent London NW10 9SD
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector. The inspectors made 13 observations of varying lengths of children's learning, and held meetings with governors and staff. They observed the school's work, and spoke informally with children, parents and staff. They looked at a range of documentation, including planning for and assessments of children's learning, the centre's data on children's progress, evidence of leaders' monitoring and evaluation and plans for improvement, reports by the local authority following their visits, staff questionnaires and 66 parental questionnaires.

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

- How well planning and assessment systems are established and used to ensure that the provision meets the needs of different groups of children, particularly those who speak English as an additional language and the more able.
- How well children progress in developing their language and mathematical skills.
- How far the provision has improved since the last inspection and how well leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, understand the school's strengths and weaknesses, and their role in helping it to improve.
- The impact of the school's work with parents and carers and the community on outcomes for children.

## Information about the school

Children join Curzon Crescent in the September following their third birthday. All have full-time places, although because they had not yet settled, a few were not staying for the whole day at the time of the inspection. Children spend a full year at the centre before transferring to Reception classes in local primary schools. Most children at Curzon Crescent are from minority ethnic backgrounds. In total, 18 nationalities and 15 languages are represented. Currently, the predominant groups are children with Black Caribbean or Black African heritage. About one in nine children speak English as an additional language, usually Somali or Arabic. Nearly one in six children are at an early stage of learning English when they join the centre. Just under a quarter of children have special educational needs and/or disabilities, most commonly speech, language and communication difficulties or behavioural, social and emotional needs.

Curzon Crescent offers a range of services to parents and carers and the wider community in partnership with other agencies, to fulfil its core offer as a designated children's centre. This includes before- and after-school care for children in the Nursery, although the childcare for children aged 0 to 3 years has closed since the last inspection because it was not financially viable. The head of centre retired in July 2009. A 'soft federation' with a local school was formed from September, which will last until April 2010 when the recently appointed new head of centre takes up post. Under the federation arrangements, the headteacher of College Green Nursery School acts as executive head of centre for half the week, whilst the deputy of Curzon Crescent is associate headteacher.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

It is evident from the children's attitudes and the questionnaires completed by parents and carers that they agree with inspectors that this is a good school. The parent who said their child 'can't wait to get there in the morning' could have been describing more or less any one of the children at Curzon Crescent. The children fully enjoy their time at the Nursery. They arrive with smiles on their faces, eager to find out what activities are on offer that day, and are soon engrossed in what they are doing. The school develops excellent partnerships with parents and carers, which, as one parent was keen to tell inspectors, is more than just a good relationship, it is a conversation about learning. All parents and carers feel they are kept well informed about their children's progress and how they can support their learning.

Outcomes for children are good. The inclusive and caring environment nurtures children's personal and social skills. Teaching and the curriculum are good. Ongoing assessments of the children's interests, as well as their skills and knowledge, are used to plan next steps in learning and the outdoor area is well used to support all areas of development. As a result, the children make good progress in developing early literacy and mathematical skills, as well as in other areas of their learning. No group achieves significantly better or worse than any other because staff know the children well and provide good support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language. However, opportunities are missed to stretch fully those children who are capable of achieving more.

The centre's leadership is in a period of transition. The executive headteacher is very clear that the centre's work should be driven by the vision of providing the very best for children and their families. She has established a good partnership with the associate headteacher, who has been a key to developing the quality of provision since the last inspection. However, in addition to these temporary arrangements, there have also been recent changes in the leadership of the governing body. This does not mean that the school is standing still, but it does mean that some things are still at an early stage of development. The executive and associate headteachers have a clear picture, through their monitoring of the provision and analysis of data, of what still needs to improve, but plans have not been formalised yet. This is because the executive headteacher is determined that the staff and governors should be more involved in identifying priorities and planning how outcomes for children and their families might be improved, and this is still work in progress. Not all policies are up to date. It is because so much is new or temporary that the capacity for future improvement is judged satisfactory rather than good at this point in time.

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

- Increase the level of challenge for more-able children by ensuring that:
  - weekly planning makes clear the expected outcomes for children of different abilities, particularly those capable of achieving more
  - staff identify activities to extend children's learning in their daily planning and encourage targeted children to participate
  - staff intervene to support and challenge more-able children in those activities they choose for themselves.
- Sharpen strategic planning by:
  - developing the role of middle leaders and governors in monitoring and evaluating provision to identify priorities for future improvement
  - ensuring plans clearly identify what the intended impact on outcomes for children will be
  - ensuring all policies and plans are reviewed and their impact monitored on a regular basis.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

**2**

The children have extremely positive attitudes to learning because they respond well to the adults' own enthusiasm and the supportive relationships they develop, particularly with their own groups. The children sustain high levels of concentration and perseverance from an early age because activities are planned to build on and develop their interests. They are equally happy as independent learners, choosing what to do alone or with friends, or working with adults. Skilled interaction by the staff, for example in role play in the post office or activities such as making sandwiches, helps the children to develop early reading and writing skills or encourages their use of mathematical vocabulary. Planning a full range of activities outside encourages the children to engage in all areas of learning as part of their play. The children make good progress. Most, but not all, join the Nursery with skills that are at low levels for their age. By the time they leave, the majority are working within the expectations for their age.

Behaviour is good, whether the children are inside or out, playing with friends or working with an adult. The children's confident manner and self-esteem indicate how safe they feel. They understand the difference between right and wrong and are often able to demonstrate self-control when things do not go their way. They take responsibility for tidying up after themselves and develop positive attitudes to healthy lifestyles through eating healthy snacks and well-balanced meals, and joining in physical activities outside.

*These are the grades for children's outcomes*

**Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

**2**

<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>Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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	2
<b>The extent to which children feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Children's behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Children's attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The staff plan a wide range of interesting activities to capture children's imagination and develop their skills and knowledge. There are plenty of opportunities for the children to work and play with adults and each other, and to pursue interests and learning on their own. Weekly planning makes it clear what skills and knowledge the children are expected to develop in each area of learning. However, it is not always clear how this links to specific activities or how activities can be modified to meet the needs and abilities of different children. The majority of the staff do this instinctively and teachers are particularly skilled at observing children's learning and intervening with open questions, which prompt children to think. However, not all the staff have the expertise to extend children's learning in the same way.

Systems for observing children's learning and tracking their progress over time are well established. The staff meet daily in their teams to review activities and the children's response to them. They discuss how they can adapt them to take account of children's interests, as well as extend their skills and knowledge. This includes planning activities to challenge those children who are capable of achieving more. However, children are not always targeted to join these activities. Adults do not intervene in the learning of the more-able to the extent that they do for those children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or who are learning English as an additional language.

The children are well cared for. Home visits before the children join start to build the

<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.

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very positive relationships that are typical of the Nursery. All members of staff, including senior leaders, are on hand to welcome children and their families in the morning. A staggered start to the beginning of the day helps children to settle and gives parents and carers time to talk to the staff. Individual display boards for each child's special pictures and photos value their achievements and build their self-esteem. Good partnerships with a range of services that operate from the children's centre and within the local authority ensure that additional support is available for those children and families who need it.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>2</b>
	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Senior staff and the governors are ambitious for the centre and its children and want to see it become outstanding. The associate headteacher has played a key role in working alongside the staff to improve the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The executive headteacher is building on this by focusing the staff on children's learning. Morning 'learning walks' encourage the staff to share why they have planned activities and the learning they are trying to develop. Formal observations of the staff's work focus on the progress children make as much as what the staff do. The executive and associate headteachers know what they need to do to bring about improvement. Appropriate actions are being taken; for example, the school has recently invested in new computer software in order to track children's progress more accurately and analyse outcomes in more depth, including the impact of the wider services. However, to date too much has depended on senior staff and a handful of governors and not enough is formalised in clear plans that set out intended and measurable impact on outcomes for children. Work to involve the staff in planning for improvement is still at an early stage but the responses in staff questionnaires indicate that already the vast majority know what the school is trying to achieve and feel involved in the process. A thread through all aspects of the school's work is its commitment to equality and community cohesion. The school analyses how well different groups of children are doing and knows which may need additional support or encouragement. The ethnic and cultural diversity of families is celebrated and parents and carers from similar backgrounds are encouraged to support each other. This explains why the community is so cohesive and children are accepting of differences and developing an appreciation of

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diversity within their world. However, governors acknowledge that not all policies and plans relating to this aspect of the school's work have been reviewed regularly enough or their impact formally evaluated.

Safeguarding procedures are robust. There are clear procedures for ensuring the safety of children, backed up by regular training for the staff. Parents and carers are confident their children are safe in school and know that their views are taken into account.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>3</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	2
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	3
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	2

## Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are pleased with the work of the school. A much higher proportion than in most schools returned the questionnaire and everyone said that overall they were happy with their children's experience at Curzon Crescent. Parents and carers confirm that their children enjoy school and inspectors agree with their views that the school is well led, that their children are safe and helped to have a healthy lifestyle, and that behaviour is managed effectively.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Curzon Crescent Children's Centre 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 66 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 103 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	64	23	35	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	59	25	38	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	43	65	23	35	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	55	27	41	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	41	62	24	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	55	30	45	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	50	31	47	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)	25	38	37	56	3	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	42	37	56	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	42	38	56	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	50	30	45	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	33	50	31	47	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	65	23	35	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.**



11 December 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Curzon Crescent Children's Centre, London NW10 9SD

It was lovely to meet you all and see how much you enjoy coming to the Nursery. It was great to see how much you enjoyed stories like Goldilocks and the Three Bears and We're Going On A Bear Hunt. I particularly liked your special boards where you display your pictures and the things you have made.

I agree with you and your parents that Curzon Crescent is a good Nursery and I can see why you are so happy there. All the grown-ups care for you and help you.

You have lots of interesting things to do and a lovely garden to play in. You are learning new things and getting better at others all the time and you behave well.

To make the Nursery even better, we have asked the grown-ups to make sure they:

- always help all of you to learn as much as possible
- write their plans down and check if they have worked.

Yours sincerely

Alison Storey

Her Majesty's Inspector

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