

Coulsdon Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101703
Local Authority	Croydon
Inspection number	335771
Inspection date	12 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Sarah McDermott

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Edward Denley
Headteacher	Mr Mark Rosewell
Date of previous school inspection	2 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors made nine observations of varying lengths of children's learning. In addition, they held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, inclusion manager and the chairman of governors and spoke to groups of children and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at information the school had collected on children's progress, the school development plan and procedures for keeping pupils safe. Over 40 parental questionnaires were returned and analysed.

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

- whether all children, and in particular the least able and the more able, made similar progress in their learning
- whether attendance rates were adequate
- the impact of leadership and management at all levels in contributing to the school's improvement
- whether children were learning about their community.

Information about the school

Coulsdon Nursery School is part of a federation with Chipstead Valley Primary School and Children's Centre, sharing the same headteacher. After their first year of the Early Years Foundation Stage in the nursery school, children move on to Reception classes elsewhere, with most going on to Chipstead Valley Primary School. Nearly three quarters of children are of White British heritage. Very few children speak a language other than English at home. Although a smaller number of children than average need extra help with language and social skills, the proportion is growing. The school has gained Effective Early Learning accreditation and the Inclusion Quality Mark.

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

2

Main findings

Coulsdon Nursery is a good school where children are extremely safe and secure. The level of care and support for children is second to none. Parents are very pleased with the way their children settle really quickly and make positive strides in their learning. A great deal of this is down to the friendly, supportive and comforting staff team. One parent commented, 'My children simply love their teachers. I could not wish for a better environment to start their school years.'

Children learn well and make at least good progress in all areas of learning. The school is especially successful in helping those children who find interacting with others difficult or who have limited communication skills, to make outstanding progress. However, staff do not always enable the more able children to make similarly excellent progress to their classmates, for example by encouraging them to use more adventurous vocabulary or giving them more challenging activities. For children so young and new to their surroundings, behaviour is exceptional. They are very knowledgeable for their age about how to keep safe, active and healthy. All in all their personal development is impressive.

The headteacher is justifiably a highly regarded and visionary leader, with a clear view of how nursery education fits into the full educational process from birth to the end of primary school. Consequently, children and parents move seamlessly from the children's centre to the nursery and on to the primary school with minimum disruption. The deputy headteacher, who takes effective leadership of the nursery on a day-to-day basis, has masterminded the improvement in monitoring the progress of children to ensure staff plan for the next steps in their learning. The quality of teaching is good because relationships between adults and children are very trusting and staff know the particular needs of each and every child so well. The monitoring of the quality of teaching is not as rigorous as it could be. The deputy headteacher realises this and that there is more scope for her to share her excellent teaching practice amongst them. The range of activities and experiences provided for the children is excellent, both inside and outside, with a first-rate emphasis on children becoming independent and self-motivated learners.

The nursery has maintained good standards since the last inspection. Senior managers and governors have improved attendance rates and have an accurate appraisal of the nursery's effectiveness. Consequently, it has good capacity to continue with further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to excellent by:

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- senior leaders regularly and formally observing staff teach so they can inform them how to perfect their teaching methods
- ensuring staff are always prepared to help the more able children through stretching vocabulary, answering questions and providing challenging activities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

2

Children arrive happily at the beginning of their sessions with smiling faces, keen to find their friends and greet the grown ups. The tears of the few unsettled arrivals soon dry up with a comforting welcome and an interesting activity. The attendance rate of the children is good, although parents sometimes find it difficult to deliver their children on time for the morning session. The children get on extremely well with each other - boys and girls and children of different ethnic backgrounds or abilities. There is no reported bullying or racism. Children feel very safe and confidently approach adults if they are upset, being annoyed by another child, or just want to ask a question. One boy carefully cordoned off the climbing frame with tape, and added his own safety notice, because he realised the rain had made it slippery. Children take plenty of active exercise and know about healthy things to eat. During the inspection they crowded around the snack table, eager to taste sultanas and melon. Children willingly take on small tasks around the site. They park the tricycles sensibly and work as a team to wipe the large outside blackboard. Their great sense of independence in deciding what activity they would like to do is preparing them very well for the next stage of education. Children are starting to learn more about people who have different religions or ways of life. Overall, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children is excellent.

Children learn well because they have great affection for the staff. They know it is fun to find out things and are proud to show adults what they can do or tell. In a short group session on mathematical shapes, children were very keen to identify circles, triangles, squares and rectangles. Children are captivated by story times and many interject with comments and questions. Less able children learn particularly well because activities are pitched at just the right level to encourage them and enable them to feel they have been successful. Articulate and able children have high levels of interest and motivation, either playing independently or often organising themselves in a mature and sensible way. One girl took it upon herself to copy the school administration officer by taking round a clip board to check who was present or absent. However, on occasion, more able children do not progress as much as they could because opportunities are missed to build on their language capabilities or to extend their knowledge. Boys and girls and children from different ethnic backgrounds or who do not speak English at home make similarly good progress in their learning. By the time children leave the nursery, many are further ahead in working towards achieving the early learning goals than would be expected for their age. This bodes well for continued progress in the Reception class.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

2

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

Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Children's attainment ¹	2
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
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	2
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The staff plan activities well to match the needs of the individual children. Careful observations of what children know and can do are used effectively to decide what activities are organised for the week and which child needs particular attention to aid their learning. Teaching sessions are just the right length of time to keep children's attention and get the best out of them. Staff are good at knowing when concentration is lapsing and moving the activity on. They make very good use of imaginative resources to add interest to learning and encourage the use of all senses. For example in an excellent story time about the 'Owl Family', the teacher had owl puppets for the children to hold and also a basket full of leaves and feathers to replicate an owl's nest. This is particularly helpful for the less able children. However, not all staff are sufficiently prepared in their teaching sessions with activities or resources to challenge the more able. Bright and communicative children regularly ask 'why', which sometimes can put members of staff on the spot.

Children are kept interested and productive with the excellent range of activities to cover all areas of learning. The outside playground is used extensively in all weathers. Rain does not stop play because children can select their own boots from the 'welly rack' and are provided with 'puddle-jumper' suits. Manoeuvring trikes up and down the slope, complete with its own speed humps, gives the children very good physical challenge. There is plenty of scope for independence, because resources are kept in accessible

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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places, including handy computers and an interactive whiteboard. One parent summed up, 'My son loves the wide variety of activities on offer and he loves the freedom of getting messy!' A productive partnership with the federated primary school enhances the curriculum with an exchange of staff and resources.

The care, guidance and support of children are outstanding. The school works very effectively with families, particularly of vulnerable children, to make sure they get the utmost from their education. Close liaison with outside agencies ensures the school does what it can to remove any barriers to learning arising from health problems, home circumstances or specific learning needs. A parent of a child with communication problems has seen definite improvements and concludes in the reply to her questionnaire, 'We cannot praise the school enough.'

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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?

The headteacher, deputy headteacher and inclusion manager work well as a team to drive improvement in the nursery. The existence of one school improvement plan for the children's centre, nursery and primary school underlines the senior management team's vision of the nursery as a vital piece of the successful federation jigsaw. Within the plan, precise objectives give a focus for the improvement of teaching and learning in the nursery. The headteacher and deputy headteacher can clearly identify successful teaching, but they are not undertaking regular enough observations of teaching sessions to fine tune their understanding of what needs to be improved to move the quality of teaching on from good to excellent.

Governors give a very good strategic lead and ensure all statutory responsibilities are met. They have a clear understanding of the progress of the children via regular updates from the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The nursery follows safeguarding procedures meticulously, but without restricting children's access to exciting and challenging activities so they can learn how to deal sensibly with risk. Links with parents are good, based on regular consultation and open dialogue. The promotion of equal opportunities and the elimination of any discrimination are at the heart of the school. No child is left out of any activity if at all possible.

The headteacher and his staff ensure that the nursery is a valuable part of the local community. They are now extending the nursery's reach to links with other schools

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nationally. At their own level, children warmly accept their own nursery community and are growing in their knowledge of children from other religions and ways of life.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
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

Parents who returned questionnaires or who spoke to the inspection team are very pleased with the school. They all believe that their children are happy and safe at the nursery. They consider that the nursery is led and managed effectively. There was considerable parental praise of support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The inspectors fully endorse these views. A few parents would like to have more precise information on how their children are progressing and how they can help them at home with their learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Coulsdon 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 45 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	41	91	4	9	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	96	2	4	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	20	44	19	42	4	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	51	18	40	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	28	62	13	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	60	15	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	76	11	24	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)	23	51	16	36	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	73	10	22	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	49	21	47	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	56	16	36	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	87	6	13	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	84	7	16	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.



16 November 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Coulsdon Nursery School, Coulsdon CR5 3BT

I really enjoyed meeting you all when I visited your nursery. I particularly enjoyed watching you mixing the playdough and then making your own cakes and shapes from it. You certainly have great fun outside too, even when it is raining!

Coulsdon Nursery is a good school because you have good teachers who organise the nursery well. I am not surprised that you all love going to the nursery. I am pleased to see that your attendance has improved and that you all learn well.

These are the things that make your nursery so good:

- your behaviour
- having a go at things on your own
- knowing how to keep yourselves healthy by eating plenty of fruit and taking exercise
- looking after yourselves to keep safe and sound
- helping to clear up and do jobs around the nursery
- the exciting things teachers arrange for you to do (like playing with water, dressing up, riding scooters and trikes)
- how well adults look after you.

To make your nursery even better I have asked your headteacher and deputy headteacher to see if they can make sure all the adults always encourage you to enjoy using interesting words or longer sentences. Also some of you could have a go at something a little more difficult at each learning session.

Yours sincerely

Sarah McDermott

Lead inspector

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