

Surbiton Children's Centre Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102560
Local Authority	Kingston upon Thames
Inspection number	335924
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Natalia Power

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	118
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Christopher
Headteacher	Penny Walton
Date of previous school inspection	29 June 2007
School address	Alpha Road Surbiton KT5 8RS
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed the two class teachers, and also the specialist support providers and learning assistants, in both the indoor and outdoor learning areas. Inspectors talked to governors, staff and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's safeguarding procedures, its tracking of children's progress, the school development plan, minutes of the governing body, and curricular planning. They checked the 91 questionnaires submitted by parents and carers.

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

- the effectiveness of the school's measures to increase children's attendance
- the quality of the school's tracking of children's progress
- the impact of the school's promotion of community cohesion within the local community and in the wider world.

Information about the school

Most children start school in the September after their third birthday and stay for a year until they move to the Reception Year in a range of primary schools. Around a quarter of the children attend all day and the rest either in the morning or in the afternoon. There is provision for up to 30 children to extend their attendance on a flexible basis from eight in the morning to six in the evening. Fewer children are known to be eligible for free school meals than is usual. Over a third comes from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, and nearly a fifth is at an early stage of learning English. A lower than usual proportion has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school incorporates a unit for up to 10 children on the autistic spectrum. The school forms part of a Sure Start Children's Centre, which is managed by the governing body, and which is subject to separate inspection.

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

- This is an outstanding school, where children receive, in the words of one parent, 'a fantastic introduction to learning'. The hallmark of the school is the exemplary care it offers to all children, identifying and addressing their needs fully. One parent commented: 'All the children have the same opportunities to learn, regardless of their abilities.' The adults go out of their way to remove all barriers to children's learning. As a result, all the children thoroughly enjoy their learning and achieve exceptionally well.
- The wealth of tasks offered to the children, both indoors and outdoors, are designed to stimulate their curiosity and extend their learning fully. The nature walks and farm visits, and the many visitors who bring art, story telling or animals to the children, enrich their learning and give them a sense of wonder about the world.
- The children develop outstanding personal qualities. They are constantly encouraged to make decisions about what they are going to learn, and this enables them to grow in confidence.
- Children make outstanding progress because no opportunity is missed to extend their learning through well-targeted questioning. As a result, children's speaking and listening skills are fully developed, and the children leave the school with high attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- The children's huge enjoyment of their learning is reflected in their attendance. The school has made great efforts to tackle the persistent absences of a small number of children and, as a result, attendance has been rising year after year, and is now high.
- The school promotes community cohesion well. Children from a variety of backgrounds get on very well together and the school is a hub of the local community. Leaders and managers recognise that they do not sufficiently ensure that children learn as much as they possibly can about the wider world.
- The headteacher and her deputy are highly ambitious for the school and are relentless in seeking ways of improving it. Leaders, managers and governors have an excellent understanding of their school and plan extremely well for the future. They have made a number of important improvements since the last inspection. These factors indicate that the school has an excellent capacity to continue to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Ensure that children acquire a greater understanding of people's faiths and cultures in other parts of the world.

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

'My child has blossomed at the school.' This comment from one parent is representative of many which pay tribute to the outstanding progress made by the children in their learning. The children enter the Nursery with skills and aptitudes which are varied, but generally a little below those expected nationally for three-year-olds. By the time they leave, all have made excellent progress in their learning and the attainment levels seen during the inspection were consistently high. The reason for their outstanding achievement and enjoyment is, in the words of another parent, 'the inspired, creative learning environment'. In 'hello time', for example, children learn to socialise and greet one another, to practise their number skills and to speak and listen to one another, while at the same time enjoying singing and enthusiastically doing the actions to the songs. They bring the learning home with them, and one parent commented: 'My child almost daily comes home singing the songs he has learnt.' There are no differences in the progress made by different ethnic groups. Children at an early stage of learning English receive focused support in their play-based activities and make excellent progress. Children with a range of additional needs receive outstanding support and make progress in step with others. Children on the autistic spectrum receive outstanding support for their learning and social needs and are fully integrated into the life of the school.

Children feel completely safe. For example, they understand the need to hold hands and wear high-visibility jackets when they are out on school trips. They love the many opportunities to be healthy and develop excellent physical skills, not only by climbing and running and cycling in the exciting outdoor areas but also in their visits to the local wildlife park. They fully understand the importance of a healthy diet, and tell adults that carrots and houmous are good for them, while crisps have too much salt. In this safe and supportive environment, children from all backgrounds play well together. They behave exceptionally well, and are ready to share and take turns. Children make an outstanding contribution to their own community and to the wider community, for example through growing their own vegetables and by taking part in many local events. The children develop excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural qualities. For example, the school's strong commitment to the study of nature gives them a sense of wonder and tenderness towards the tiniest of creatures. Children gain an excellent grounding in language and number skills which prepares them exceptionally well for the next stage in their schooling and later life.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The school's ethos of promoting children's independent learning is shared by all the highly-trained and experienced staff. No opportunity is missed to extend the children's learning, and encourage them to think for themselves. For example, when a child dropped a rubber egg on the floor the adult immediately asked what would happen if it were a real egg. A recent visit to a farm was used in a number of exciting ways to develop the children's learning. The children were absorbed in listening to stories about farmyard animals and joined in enthusiastically, making appropriate sounds. Some were encouraged to develop literacy skills by making marks on a 'thank you' letter to the farmer. Others used their imagination in creating a farmyard of their own with soil and toy animals. This activity was particularly enjoyed by children at an early stage of learning English, and they learned a wide variety of words while rolling their toy pigs in the mud. Snack times are also used to stimulate learning as well as social skills, and the adults gently encourage the children to count out the food items and discuss their food preferences.

A particular strength of the school is the excellent and thoughtful curriculum provided for the children to enhance their learning and widen their horizons. There is an enormous variety of activities, with opportunities for developing all six areas of learning both indoors and in the stimulating outdoor play areas. One parent provided a glimpse of the range of activities offered: 'My child has enjoyed eating noodles with chopsticks, holding a newborn chick (hatched at the Nursery), mixing chocolate, coffee and sugar with water, and painting with spaghetti!' Adults base many of the activities on songs and

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stories, encouraging the children to develop their imagination as well as their vocabulary. Computers are used exceptionally well to give children important new skills and to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. For example, a group of children who do not normally find sitting still easy were fully absorbed in using an interactive whiteboard to tell adults about what they had learnt on a nature trip. This encouraged them to develop their concentration.

The level of challenge is extremely high because the school rigorously collects information on children's progress, and then uses this information to provide activities which bring out the best in each child. Vulnerable children are given excellent support. Parents and carers of children with additional needs pay tribute to the support provided by the school. One commented: 'The school is excellent at ensuring that my child's special needs are taken care of.' Children's progress is shared with their families in clear and user-friendly ways. Transition arrangements are exemplary. Home visits ensure that children quickly settle into the school. When the time comes for the children to move to the next stage of their education, the school's excellent partnerships with local primary schools ensure that they are prepared extremely well for the transition.

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?

The headteacher, ably supported by her deputy, has been very effective in promoting exceptionally high standards and ensuring that all staff strive for excellence. One parent described leadership at the school as 'inspirational'. There is a shared sense of purpose among all the adults and the school is, in the words of one member of the support staff, 'a happy ship with a great captain and crew'. The headteacher and her team have fully met the recommendation from the last inspection to raise attendance. Other improvements include the way children's progress is tracked even more rigorously so leaders and managers can identify quickly any child who is in danger of falling behind, and put in place appropriate and highly effective support. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination exceptionally well, so that all the children succeed. Leaders, managers and governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are effective and that children are well protected.

Governors provide outstanding support. They are fully engaged in the life of the school and share the leaders' high standards and determination to maintain the school's

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exceptional qualities. The school instils in children a particularly strong understanding of the local community, and has appropriate plans in hand to ensure that children learn more about people's ways of life in more distant parts of the world. Leaders and managers work in extremely effective partnership with parents, keeping them fully informed about their children's progress. One parent commented: 'I attended a numeracy workshop evening which was excellent and gave me practical ideas on how I can use maths at home with my child.'

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	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	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

Almost all parents and carers who responded through questionnaires or who spoke to the inspection team expressed great enthusiasm for the school. All agreed that their children enjoy school and that it keeps them safe and healthy. Inspectors fully endorse these views. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are happy with their child's experiences at the school. One described it as 'a wonderful setting with lovely facilities and brilliant teachers'. Inspectors agree that this is an outstanding school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Surbiton Children's Centre 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 91 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 118 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	77	85	14	15	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	81	89	10	11	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	64	70	25	27	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	66	73	21	23	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	77	85	13	14	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	74	81	13	14	3	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	68	75	23	25	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)	69	76	18	20	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	72	79	14	15	3	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	65	71	24	26	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	63	69	26	29	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	76	84	13	14	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	79	87	11	12	1	1	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.



19 May 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Surbiton Children's Centre Nursery School, Surbiton, KT5 8RS

A little while ago two visitors came to your school to watch you play and learn. We had a lovely time at your school. Thank you for welcoming us. This is what we found.

- You are lucky to go to such a fantastic school. The grown-up word for your school is 'outstanding'. Your parents and carers love your school as much as you do.
- You learn an amazing amount for children of your age. This is because the adults ask you many questions and these really make you think.
- Your school gives you a huge number of exciting activities to help you learn. You love all the chances you are given for exploring and painting and sticking and climbing and jumping. You also love the stories and songs the adults teach you.
- Your school keeps you completely healthy and safe.
- You are all really happy at your school. This is because you get on so well with one another, and always share and take turns.
- You love going to Fishponds, and you care a great deal about the tiny creatures you find there.
- You learn a great deal about people in your own community and the different ways they live and worship. Now we have asked those in charge to help you learn more about people in other countries.
- Even though you are very young, you can still do your bit to help your school by being as kind and helpful as you can to one another.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Natalia Power

Lead inspector

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