

Nell Gwynn Nursery School

Meeting House Lane, London, SE15 2TT

Inspection dates 8–9 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders have created a happy school. Children learn well. They are secure and looked after well.
- Leaders and governors are effective in ensuring that the quality of teaching is good and leads to children achieving well.
- The new acting headteacher is improving the school. For example, teaching is improving because of her effective management of teaching and learning.
- Activities for the children are wide ranging and inviting. They promote learning well. Many activities have a strong focus on literacy and numeracy, and this promotes children's basic skills well.
- The school engages well with parents. It supports the whole family where needed. Parents have a high opinion of the school.
- The school promotes children's understanding of British values effectively. All members of the school respect one another's heritages and backgrounds.
- Children behave well and get on well together. They are willing to learn and are kind to one another.
- Children are kept safe. Safeguarding procedures are effective. Children are taught how to keep themselves safe.
- Teaching is consistently good in quality. All adults care for the children very well.
- Adults plan effectively for the next day's learning. They build on the children's interests and provide a rich learning experience for them.
- Adults make sure that all areas of children's learning are covered, and that children learn reading, writing and number skills effectively.
- The school promotes children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively, for example through outdoor learning in a woodland setting. This enables them to develop respect and love for nature.
- Children from all backgrounds and with many home tongues achieve well. They make good progress in acquiring language and number skills. They are well prepared for the Reception Year.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs learn well and make good progress. They are effectively supported by the staff within the school and by a range of outside agencies.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Leaders do not ensure that records of children's progress allow staff to check readily the progress of different groups of children.
- Adults do not ensure at all times that children's speaking skills are fully developed.
- Adults do not always make sure that all children, particularly the most able, are given activities that stretch them fully.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors looked at the children’s learning in the indoor and outdoor play areas. The acting headteacher or her deputy joined the inspectors for around half of their observations. The inspectors observed the children eating lunch, tidying up and taking part in group sessions. They attended staff planning meetings.
- The inspectors held meetings with the acting headteacher and with members of the senior leadership team. They met subject leaders. Inspectors met a group of early years educators.
- Inspectors met a representative from the local authority. They also met the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body together with two other governors.
- The inspectors took account of responses to a questionnaire from 31 members of staff.
- The inspectors took account of 24 responses to Parent View, the online survey of their views. The inspectors spoke to a number of parents. They also took account of the school’s own survey of parents’ views. Inspectors received one letter from parents.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents. These included the school’s own views of how well it is doing and the minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- The inspectors looked at information on the children’s attainment and progress, and examined records relating to behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Natalia Power, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Meena Walia

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized nursery school.
- The provision for two-year-olds in the school is inspected separately and did not form part of this inspection.
- The acting headteacher has been in post since January 2015.
- Most children come from a wide range of ethnic heritages. The proportion of children who speak English as an additional language is higher than average.
- Fewer pupils than average are entitled to support from the early years pupil premium. This premium is additional government funding for children eligible for free school meals or those looked after by the local authority. The school has not received any of this funding yet.
- The proportion of children who are disabled or who have special educational needs is higher than average.
- Around one in eight children attends full time. The rest attend part time in either the morning or afternoon sessions.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To ensure consistently outstanding teaching so that children make rapid progress in all areas of their learning:
 - provide challenging activities, particularly for the most-able children
 - bring out children's speaking skills whenever possible.
- Improve the recording of children's progress by developing a system that will allow staff to check readily the progress of different groups of children.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and governors have created a happy school where the children are looked after very well. In this secure environment, children flourish. They behave well and the quality of teaching is good. Each child has an equal opportunity to succeed. There is no discrimination, and there are good relations among all members of the school.
- Leaders have a good understanding of what the school does well and what it needs to do to become outstanding. Their plans cover the right priorities, and they are ambitious for the children. Leaders are tackling important areas of the school's work, and there are clear signs of improvement. For example, the leaders' focus on strengthening the quality of teaching has resulted in children making increasingly rapid progress in their learning.
- Information on children's progress is collected regularly. Parents are well informed about their children's progress. However, children's progress is not yet recorded in a format that allows staff to analyse the performance of groups of children quickly.
- Leaders manage the quality of teaching well. They observe the children's learning, both formally and informally, and provide helpful guidance to the adults on how to improve.
- Currently there are few children who are likely to benefit from support from the early years pupil premium. To some extent this is because the school already ensures that all children who stay for lunch receive it free of charge. The school is working closely with the local authority to ensure that the additional funding, when it becomes available to the school, will support those who might be eligible.
- Nursery schools are not eligible for the additional funding for sport and physical education available to primary schools. Nevertheless, the school makes sure that children have good opportunities to run, climb, balance, jump and ride wheeled vehicles.
- Subject leaders provide good support to senior leaders. This ensures that children learn basic skills effectively and make good progress.
- The local authority provides effective support. They have visited the school often to provide support for the new leadership team. Their support has kept the school on an even keel through recent changes in leadership.
- Children learn well because the activities prepared for them by adults are varied and exciting. It is impossible for children to become bored, as new and inviting activities are put out every day. Each classroom has a theme, such as creativity or discovery, and children are free to explore the whole exciting and safe environment. The activities provide children with good opportunities to learn literacy and numeracy.
- Children are prepared well for growing up in modern Britain with British values. They celebrate the many heritages and backgrounds within the school. For example, a group activity started with children choosing from a display of different languages which language to say 'hello' in. This effectively raised the children's awareness of the diversity within the school and helped them understand why all should be respected.
- The school engages well with parents. Those who spoke to inspectors or responded to the online survey, Parent View, all agreed that their children are safe, happy and doing well. A typical comment from one parent was to praise the school for its 'genuine respect, love and care given to each child every day'. Several parents said that the school looked after the interests of the whole family, providing help and support where needed.
- Leaders and governors effectively meet their statutory obligation to keep children safe. The site is secure. All safeguarding checks are carried out rigorously.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school well and are involved in its life. They visit the school regularly to see its work for themselves. They report their findings to other governors. This helps all governors to ask searching questions to hold the school to account.
 - Governors know how well children are achieving overall. They receive clear overall information on children's progress from the start of the year to the end. They do not always receive sufficiently detailed information on the achievement of groups of children.
 - Governors check for themselves how well the children are learning, and this enables them to assure themselves that teaching is good. The quality of their management of the performance of all staff is effective. They expect a great deal from the staff and set challenging targets for improvement. They understand the link between teachers' progression along the pay scales and the progress children make. They are not afraid to tackle any underperformance by staff, should it occur. This enables them to get good value for money from the staff. As a result of the vigilance of governors and leaders, the

quality of teaching is improving.

- Governors effectively meet their statutory responsibilities to keep the children safe. They undertake site visits. They make sure that adults who work with children are safe, for example by ensuring that disqualified persons cannot gain employment at the school. They are well trained in safeguarding, such as in safer recruitment.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of children is good. They learn and play together peaceably, and squabbles are rare. Adults gently and firmly sort out any disagreement over whose turn it is to use the equipment. They explain to the children the need to share and to respect the feelings of others. As a result, children feel protected. This makes them confident and they learn well.
- Children are ready to learn and enjoy their activities. Their willingness to learn, although good, is not exceptional. Occasionally, if tasks lack challenge, children lose concentration and do not see the task through.
- Children who stay for lunch receive healthy home-cooked food. They eat at family-type tables with adults showing them, by example, how to ask politely for what they want. They are encouraged to serve others and to pass food from one to another. This focus on good manners teaches the children important social skills.
- Children attend regularly. Absences are carefully analysed. The school knows if any child is away for any reason other than illness, and follows up absences with parents. This teaches young children the importance of school.
- The school regularly comes together as a whole, particularly in whole-school music sessions. In one such session, inspectors observed the enthusiasm of children as they sang together and played instruments. Such opportunities strongly promote all aspects of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and contribute well to their enjoyment of school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is good. The site is secure. Adults who work with children have their backgrounds carefully checked. Those responsible for child protection are well trained and keep their training up to date.
- The school makes effective plans for keeping children safe, both when they are within the school and when they are taken out on trips. For example, all possible hazards are considered in advance before children are taken to their woodland learning environment.
- There is no bullying at the school. Records examined by inspectors confirm that it is a bullying-free environment and that children are kind to one another.
- Children are taught how to keep themselves safe. They are taught the possible risks from being approached by strangers. They are shown how to raise their hand and say 'I don't like it' if anyone makes them feel uncomfortable.
- The children are too young to use social media on computers unaided. However, the school is alert to risks, such as cyber bullying, and makes sure that parents understand how to keep the family safe when using computers.
- Children who fall over or bump into things when playing are carefully examined to see if further treatment is needed. Each incident is carefully recorded, and letters go out to parents if children sustain head injuries or require treatment.
- The outdoor play areas have the right level of adventure for the children, while remaining a safe environment. Children are allowed to climb low trees under adult supervision. Children are encouraged to jump from a safe height. These safe risks help them to cope with risks that they might encounter when out of school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good. All adults, both teachers and support staff, care for the children very well, and make sure that they are focused on their learning.
- Teaching is not outstanding because adults do not always expect enough of the children, particularly the most able. As a result, children are not always stimulated to make rapid progress.
- Occasionally the adults are too quick to close down discussions with the children. This means that children

do not always get the chance to think things out for themselves and to use as much language as possible when talking to the adults.

- Planning for the next day's learning is effective. At the end of each day, adults discuss what went well and what promoted the best learning. This enables them to provide a rich learning experience for the children.
- Adults promote children's reading skills effectively. They choose good books to develop children's imagination, and to stimulate a wide range of activities. For example, one group of children acted out Julia Donaldson's popular story, *The Gruffalo*, using puppets, and joined in the exciting chorus of 'terrible tusks and terrible claws'. Later, they willingly joined a counting activity based on the same story, in which they counted paper cut outs of the Gruffalo's footprints.
- The teaching promotes children's writing skills well. For example, children were absorbed in mixing up 'cake' ingredients in the mud kitchen. They were then encouraged to make marks on a sheet of paper explaining the kind of cake they had made.
- Children's number skills are promoted well. For example, toy cars placed on a card representing a car park introduced children to the concepts of adding, subtracting and saying whether one child's car park had 'more' or 'fewer' cars than another's.
- The school makes sure, through such initiatives as outdoor learning in a woodland setting, that the children respect nature. The activities, such as gathering plants, feeling them and smelling them, enable children to get close to nature and enjoy it. In such ways the school promotes children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development strongly.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children achieve well. They make good progress in acquiring a range of skills, including literacy and numeracy skills.
- From starting points which vary, but which are generally below those typical for their age, they make good progress and leave with skills typical for their age. The school prepares them well for the Reception year in the many schools children move to after their time at the nursery school.
- The most-able children do not always receive the most stimulating tasks and challenges to enable them to make as much progress in their learning as possible.
- The few children eligible for support from the early years pupil premium achieve well, in line with others at the school.
- Children from all backgrounds and heritages achieve well. The many children who speak English as an additional language are well supported. For example, adults who speak the children's home tongues read dual-language books to them, gently encouraging them to use English words where possible. As a result, children soon catch up in learning English.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs achieve well. This is because they receive effective support in small groups. The school works in effective partnership with a range of external agencies to provide well for their individual needs.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	100770
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	447895

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	168
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gosia Rossi
Headteacher	Lynne Cooper (acting headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	14 September 2011
Telephone number	020 7252 8265
Fax number	020 7635 0049
Email address	office@nellgwynn.southwark.sch.uk

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