

Nell Gwynn Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100770
Local Authority	Southwark
Inspection number	323341
Inspection date	20 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Marianne Harris

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 on roll	
School (total)	148
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Barbara Stevens
Headteacher	Miss Jeanne Peskett
Date of previous school inspection	7 June 2006
School address	Meeting House Lane London SE15 2TT
Telephone number	020 7252 8265
Fax number	020 7635 0049

Age group	3-4
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school. They also investigated the following issues: how the school supports vulnerable children and what measures are being taken to improve attendance in the afternoon session. Evidence was obtained from session observations, discussions with staff and children, looking at work and talking to representatives of the governing body.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The Nursery is situated in central Peckham. There is high mobility, as many families move for economic reasons. There are 30 different home languages and a relatively high proportion of children with learning difficulties and statements of special educational needs. These needs vary, but are mainly for speech and language delay, medical needs and for autism.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Nell Gwynn Nursery School provides an outstanding standard of education and care for the children. Parents are extremely positive about the school and all agree that their children make excellent progress, gaining in confidence and acquiring the skills they will need when they move into primary school.

When they join the school, many children have skills and knowledge that are well below those expected for their age. Some are very new to English, and some have complex learning needs. Whatever their starting point, children's achievement, including those who are vulnerable, is excellent. By the time they leave the Nursery, many have reached the level usually expected for children of their age, having made outstanding progress in all areas of learning.

Most notable is the outstanding achievement in their personal development. Many join the Nursery shy and unsure of what to expect, but the extremely effective induction procedures, where children have many visits before they join, means that they soon settle into the routines, are fully included and quickly make friends. This is further enhanced by the commitment of all staff to work with parents. Their knowledge and concerns about their children are fully explored and an excellent entry profile is drawn up so that staff can effectively track the progress each child makes. In addition, staff are fully aware of the next steps children have to take in order to maintain excellent progress. Consequently children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. Meals are cooked on the premises and these always contain fruit and vegetables. Plates are usually cleared because children enjoy the meals so much. All children eagerly race outside to have a go on the wheeled toys and they are very willing to share and take turns. They respect each other and learn very well about the many cultures and beliefs represented in the school. Children attend regularly and look forward to experiencing all of the extremely exciting activities on offer. Newsletters and informal discussions remind parents of the importance of good attendance and punctuality to ensure that the children can make full use of the outstanding opportunities on offer.

All areas of learning are covered in every session of the day. Early reading, writing and mathematics skills are taught extremely well. Staff have high expectations of children speaking as much as possible. Every opportunity is given to children to write, draw and play alongside each other, acting out their ideas and experiences. Staff count with the children throughout the day, matching one to one and encouraging mathematical vocabulary, using words such as shape and size. Particular attention is paid to developing the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. The outside area is used very well for the children to plant and to find small insects. It is also a race track for wheeled toys. There is a quiet area for playing on the large ship while practising climbing and balancing skills. There are plans to develop the garden area further so that children can learn about cultivation and tend their own plants. There are interesting experiments dotted about the school. Children learn how fast a car can go down a ramp because staff have provided a drainpipe and a variety of cars for the children to experiment with. Sand and water play differs in various places around the building. In some areas it is for playing with dinosaurs, in others it is for sailing ships and splashing down ramps. All are very exciting for the children. There is a wide range of other creative activities for the children to experience; painting and drawing, cutting and sticking, model making and building with bricks of all shapes and sizes. Children delight in taking photographs of what they have built and this helps them learn the technological skills they may need later.

The children are so excited by learning because all adults are excellent role models. They listen carefully to the children in order to learn what it is that interests them, and plan activities accordingly. An excellent example of this is the work that has been carried out on 'space'. Children have made rockets, drawn aliens and made models to display throughout the school. They have visited the science museum and are very excited about all of the things they saw there. It is opportunities like these, where staff plan from the children's interests, that make teaching, learning and the curriculum so outstanding. The learning environment is very well organised, with constantly changing experiences so that children are always engaged in what they are doing. Staff work with the children in all areas of the Nursery, demonstrating new skills and extending children's knowledge further by asking open questions that challenge the children to think for themselves. Most of the activities are chosen by the children, but the staff are always there to support and extend learning.

Children who are classified as being vulnerable or those with particular learning needs are extremely well supported by adults. The newly opened sensory room is in almost constant use as children learn to communicate through specialist equipment, such as bubble tubes and fibre optic light strands. There is much joy in this room. Staff are very knowledgeable about how best to support the children. If a child is new to English then relevant community language speakers are used alongside dedicated teachers who support the learning of English. Parents are very involved. The school makes provision for teaching English to adults and some sessions are dedicated to 'dads'. These sessions are very well attended and demonstrate the commitment the school has to include everyone from the local community.

The children make outstanding progress because the school is led and managed in an excellent, creative way. All of the staff are responsive to the ever-changing needs of the local community and everyone is involved in the life of the school. Classes are provided for parents and other community groups so that their English is improved. There are support sessions for various community groups that are very well attended. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and has successfully created a team of staff who are as committed as she is. Governors are drawn from the local community and they are equally committed to uniting everyone, celebrating diversity and including everyone. Provision is constantly being reviewed so that the learning environment and the opportunities that the children have remain exciting and stimulating. Attendance, particularly for those children who attend only in the afternoons, has improved because the staff constantly remind parents of the importance of regular attendance. The issues from the last inspection have been tackled very successfully, with more letters and numbers being displayed to support children in their early numeracy and language skills. The high standards of care and education reported on at that time have been maintained and improved further. There is excellent capacity to improve further. The school is rightly held in high esteem in the local area and is a haven of calm and learning for everyone.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase children's knowledge through building on plans to develop the garden area further so that the children have more opportunities to nurture and grow their own plants.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
The standards[1] reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

02 April 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Nell Gwynn Nursery School, London, SE15 2TT

Thank you for welcoming us into your excellent Nursery a few days ago. We really enjoyed our visit and wanted to let you know what we found out.

You behave extremely well because there are many activities for you to join in with. You play together in a very friendly way and make friends easily. Your teachers work very hard to give you all the activities and make your Nursery a very good place to be. They listen to you and understand your interests so that they can plan work that is fun.

Many of your parents told us that you love going to school and we understand why. The outside area is beautiful. We have asked your headteacher to make it even more lovely by carrying out the plans she has to let you dig and plant. Perhaps you could help her and then you can grow your own plants.

There were many things that we enjoyed. You told us about the police station next door and about the sound that the police cars make. The work you have done on space and aliens is very impressive. We kept knocking our heads on all the well-made models. It is difficult to write about all the things we saw, but we understand why you love your Nursery so much.

We wish you all the best in the future and maybe we will see you again soon.

Yours faithfully

Marianne Harris

Lead Inspector