

# Kate Greenaway Nursery School and Children's Centre

Yorkway Court, London, N1 0UH

## Inspection dates

12 December 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Children make rapid gains and achieve extremely well in all aspects of their development. The school uses information about children's skills and understanding particularly well to ensure that every individual's learning needs are met and all children fulfil their potential.
- Children really love learning and as one parent or carer explained 'rush to get into Nursery'. Right from the start in the Baby Nest, close, trusting relationships with adults are formed as a result of the exceptionally warm, caring, safe atmosphere that staff provide. Behaviour is excellent because children learn to consider and respect others.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children is a high priority. Excellent cultural awareness is promoted through learning about one another's backgrounds and celebrations that involve families and the local communities.
- Teaching is outstanding. Staff plan exciting, challenging activities that reflect children's interests extremely well. Children are tremendously keen to explain what they are doing and adults are highly skilled at moving children's learning on through particularly effective questioning and discussion as they play. Sometimes, however, opportunities for children to reflect on their learning and how to get better are less well planned for.
- Support for children new to learning English and for disabled children and those with special educational needs is excellent and allows these children to make the same outstanding progress as their peers.
- The excellent leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher has created an ethos that is constantly striving to reflect on best practice and still look for ways to improve teaching and children's achievement. They are supported wholeheartedly in this by the whole staff and the governing body.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector made seven observations of children working both independently and on adult-led activities, observing one teacher as well as other early years practitioners. She was accompanied by senior staff for all of these.
- Meetings were held with staff, school leaders, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 17 responses to the online Parent View survey as well as analysing previous parental surveys and talking to parents and carers informally during the inspection. Questionnaires from staff and leaders were also considered.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at the school's documentation: policies, including those relating to safeguarding; information on children's progress and attendance; and the school's development planning.

## Inspection team

Jacqueline Marshall, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Kate Greenaway Nursery School and Children's Centre provides a range of services for children, families and the local community in the Islington area.
- The facilities include the Baby Nest, providing for children from birth to two years old, and a nursery for three to five year olds, as well as a children's centre.
- The majority of children are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Approximately a fifth of the children speak English as an additional language, of whom only a few are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled children and those with special educational needs, supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Because of their age, no children are entitled to the pupil premium funding. However, an above-average proportion of children are known to be eligible for free school meals or are in local authority care.
- The school has recently been awarded the Healthy Children's Centre award.

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

- Provide more opportunities for children to talk about what they have been learning and become even more involved in thinking about how to make the most of learning for themselves.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Children show marked enjoyment in learning. Their ability to work really well together, take responsibility for their own learning and their considerable independence are key factors in their extremely positive attitudes towards learning.
- Children challenge themselves to try new things, knowing that adults will always be there to help, and, increasingly, act independently. For example, they confidently use the wheeled vehicles: four-wheeled scooters and two-wheeled balance bikes and pedalled bikes. Because of the extremely safe and encouraging atmosphere, they quickly progress through the levels of difficulty, with most children leaving the Nursery confidently riding a bicycle.
- Although children have a wide range of skills and knowledge on entry, their starting points are typically well below those found nationally. Children in both the Nursery and the Baby Nest achieve extremely well, both in their personal, social and emotional development as well as academically.
- Irrespective of their starting points, all children, including groups such as those eligible for free school meals, make outstanding progress in all areas of learning. A very large majority achieve at least age-related expectations by the time they leave, and a larger-than-average proportion exceed expectations. Their achievement demonstrates the substantial gains they make in narrowing the gap between their attainment and that of other children nationally.
- Children make excellent gains in their literacy skills. They do so well because of the strong focus on developing their speaking and listening skills. Consequently, children, including those at an early stage of learning English as an additional language, disabled children and those with special educational needs, all make excellent gains in literacy.
- Although a previously weaker area of understanding, children made particularly good gains in their mathematical skills last year because of the school's highly effective promotion of numeracy in all areas of learning.
- Reading is promoted extremely well by all staff. Children are very keen to share books with each other, often retelling and re-enacting stories through play. They quickly develop the skills of linking sounds and letters (phonics), using these to recognise and write their own names. While all enjoy a wide range of mark-making activities, some are beginning to use their phonic skills to attempt to spell unknown words. For example, on a sign one wrote the key sounds 'l' 'm' 'n' 'j' 's' from 'lemon juice' to show what she was using to try to melt ice.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- Children respond with remarkable concentration and perseverance to the interesting and engaging tasks that are extremely well matched to their abilities. Every part of the building and its grounds is used imaginatively to provide new learning experiences, providing outstanding learning opportunities. Children freely move between indoors and outdoors as they take ownership of their own learning, really keen to explore and investigate all that is on offer.
- Staff are highly trained and keen to seek out ways to broaden the experiences they can offer the children. For example, several staff have trained to give children confidence in challenging, physical play while encouraging thought and learning at the same time. For example, during the inspection, a group of six children enthusiastically stretched and pulled large pieces of material. There were squeals of excitement as they pulled and dragged each other along. While for some this built confidence or extended their vocabulary, for others in the group it very effectively provided an opportunity to strengthen muscles and increase movement.
- Adults use every chance to extend children's speaking, including at lunchtimes, which provide an excellent opportunity to develop children's independence and social skills. Children help to give out plates and bowls and tidy away once they have eaten. They happily discuss what they are eating and are encouraged to try different foods. However, using such times to encourage

children to reflect on what they have learnt and achieved already and how they may improve upon it is less well established.

- Staff have an excellent understanding of how young children learn and plan very varied, well-resourced activities that sustain children's interest throughout the day. When children choose to work independently or with friends, adults provide encouragement or pose open questions that extend their learning even further and get them thinking more deeply.
- Adults actively play alongside groups of children to model activities and engage with children and move their learning forward extremely well. This was the case when a teacher very effectively developed children's literacy skills as they wrote lists to Father Christmas. Various resources were used, including alphabets and the children's own name cards. The teacher demonstrated letter formation for those less secure in their writing, while encouraging the more able to help other children with their lists as well as writing their own.
- Checks on children's progress are extremely thorough, constantly carried out and regularly summarised in children's profiles. Findings are then discussed with families, when targets for improving progress are shared. Staff use the information they gather on progress exceptionally well to inform long-term planning of learning for each child, as well as to plan activities for the next day. The activities chosen enable the staff to build on children's own interests and abilities to maximise learning opportunities.
- Key workers build up an extremely close relationship with children and their families. They regularly share details about children's progress and are there to support when needed.
- Parents and carers of disabled children and those with special educational needs are full of praise for the efforts of the staff. For example, one commented their child had 'achieved so many milestones so quickly'. This success is because staff are acutely aware of each individual's learning and personal development priorities, and tailor focused sessions and experiences extremely effectively in response to these.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Children's personal development is excellent. They get exceptional help to advance their moral, social, spiritual and cultural awareness. This helps to make the school very safe and welcoming.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary, when either working with an adult or playing independently. They show considerable support for one another, regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. For example, as one child struggled to stick a large poster into his scrapbook, another offered to help, asking 'Can I help you?' Staff deal promptly with instances of unwanted or unkind behaviour, teaching children how to empathise with others and to resolve conflicts amicably.
- Because of the school's successful strong focus on children's health and well-being, children contribute extremely effectively to the school community. This is demonstrated well through their readiness to be involved in looking after the school building, as well as caring for their learning environment as they look after the gardens and tidy up daily.
- Children's understanding of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle is excellent and has been recognised in the Healthy Children's Centre award. Children know they should put on a helmet if they are riding the pedalled bicycles to help them keep safe, and do this independently. Not only are they aware of their own safety but also take care of younger children as they play and learn together.
- Strong links with families, supported through home visits, mean that children develop very trusting relationships with staff. In addition, parents and carers respond positively to the school's drive to ensure that children attend regularly and arrive punctually.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, supported exceptionally well by the deputy headteacher and other leaders including the governing body, provides a very clear vision of how

the school can maintain its effectiveness while still developing and improving.

- The headteacher has fostered a tremendously positive atmosphere where all staff relish the challenges that are asked of them. For example, staff who have reached the top of their pay scale still willingly take on additional leadership responsibilities, running staff meetings and developing aspects of the curriculum. As a result, school leaders are able to consistently focus on improving the quality of teaching. The process of setting targets for teachers to improve their performance is rigorous and provision for the training of all staff is excellent.
- Leaders use information about children's achievement particularly well to identify areas across the range of learning opportunities that might be further developed and take action swiftly. For example, children's mathematical progress was recently targeted as part of a whole-school focus, training was undertaken and a review to judge the impact of the actions completed. As a result, children's mathematical skills and understanding rose considerably. The local authority provides the school with valuable support and expertise in such instances.
- Opportunities for developing all areas of learning are provided through core experiences, such as gardening and block play, as well as enriching experiences, such as visits to the theatre and the weekly musician in residence. This approach is exceedingly successful and valued extremely highly by children, parents and carers alike. All staff, in both the Baby Nest and the Nursery, play their part in delivering this rich, stimulating and engaging range of learning opportunities.
- Leaders and staff work extremely closely with a wide range of services and professionals to ensure that children's learning needs can be met, both within and beyond school. The school has very strong links with other schools, which enable staff to share resources, to learn from others and disseminate best practice.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are fully involved in checking the progress the school makes towards achieving its priorities for development and maintain their knowledge of educational developments through regular training updates. They have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and how the management of staff performance is being used to develop teaching further and improve the outcomes for children. They check rigorously that promotion and pay are related closely to how effectively teachers ensure children's academic progress and personal development. They provide very good challenge to the school's leaders and hold the headteacher to account very effectively for the school's performance. Safeguarding checks are rigorous and governors take considerable care to ensure government requirements are met and the Nursery is a safe place to work and learn. Governors are clear about the use of funding and resources to support particular groups of children. They know what the money is spent on, and how effective it is in ensuring the impressive progress of the children involved.

## 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.
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## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100385
<b>Local authority</b>	Islington
<b>Inspection number</b>	400411

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	0–5
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	51
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Helen Genia
<b>Headteacher</b>	Fiona Godfrey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 752 74850
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