

# Abbey Wood Nursery School and Children's Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100099
<b>Local Authority</b>	Greenwich
<b>Inspection number</b>	354800
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John W Paull

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	120
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Val Richeux
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jennifer Ramsook
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	Dahlia Road London SE2 0SX
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<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@abbeywood-nur.greenwich.sch.uk

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### Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision

<b>Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision</b>	Not previously inspected
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<b>Age group</b>	3–4
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 May 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	354800

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Eight sessions led by three teachers and six early years practitioners were observed, including activities chosen by the children themselves. Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff and representatives of the governing body. Opportunities were taken to talk to children about their views of the school and what it does for them. A number of parents and carers were spoken to face to face as they arrived with their children and the inspectors received and analysed 49 questionnaires. A sample of documents was scrutinised, including information related to children's work and what the children are taught, their rates of progress and safeguarding.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How far leaders and managers have succeeded in raising the quality of provision, including teaching letter sounds, such that attainment has risen since the previous inspection.
- The effectiveness of changes that have been introduced to improve the quality of care, guidance and support offered to children.
- The extent of the involvement of the governing body in bringing about improvements and the impact of their steering group on provision of services and related outcomes.

## Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average-sized nursery school. Its children represent a wide range of minority ethnic heritages, many of whom have Black African backgrounds. About a fifth of these children are at early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The majority of these children have speech and communication difficulties. An above average proportion is known to be eligible for free school meals.

Abbey Wood is also a designated children's centre and this provision is subject to a separate inspection and report, which will be made available to parents and carers. Breakfast- and after-school clubs for up to 24 two- to four-year-olds, including up to 12 three- and four-year-olds in the nursery school are provided by the children's centre.

**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

Abbey Wood Nursery is a stimulating environment that provides outstanding teaching and learning opportunities. These are planned and provided by a highly-skilled staff, who use detailed assessments of children's progress to adapt activities highly effectively to meet all needs. This use of assessment to guide teachers' planning and spot those who need extra help represents much improvement since the previous inspection. As a result, the children achieve remarkably well in all areas of learning across the Early Years Foundation Stage, and they enjoy their experiences greatly. This includes the development of children's recognition of letters and the associated sounds. Parents and carers recognise this excellence. Typically, one commented, 'I am very pleased with what the school provides and its level of care and friendliness.' Another said, 'A wonderful little nursery my child's progress is sometimes amazing and she's always been happy to come here.' The inspection findings fully support these comments.

The headteacher and staff gather initial information about the children's needs from routine home visits, the children's centre provision and openness in their approach to families. This means that they know nearly all the children before they start. Different individual requirements for effective learning are therefore met highly effectively as soon as children arrive, and their personal and emotional development is paramount. Progress is then carefully and rigorously tracked and the information used highly effectively to set targets and plan the next steps, irrespective of ethnicity, ability, social factors or special educational needs. Children's learning is highly effective and progress is very rapid, leading to outcomes above those expected for children's ages across the areas of learning.

Senior leaders and coordinators, together with the governing body, evaluate provision and outcomes with great care and accuracy, leading to improvement in the quality and monitoring of teaching. The curriculum is well planned and contains what it should, although teaching about places far away is less evident than what is taught about places close to home. Furthermore, leaders have correctly identified that the school's extensive cohesive activity within the local community should now be extended further afield. For example, a plan is underway to establish an ongoing partnership with a nursery in Finland, known as a forest school, and recently visited by the headteacher. Care, guidance and support are outstanding and include extensive links with a very wide range of agencies and services that help to tap and provide expertise for the removal of any barriers to individuals' learning. Safeguarding, including staff vetting, is managed thoroughly and effectively. These features add much to children's feelings of well-being and the children are extremely willing to state that the staff look after them well and that the nursery is a very safe place. Parents' questionnaires further confirm this outstanding outcome. All the staff demonstrate tremendous determination to tackle anything that might discriminate against progress, ensuring outstanding equality of opportunity for children of all backgrounds and ethnicities in the school. Since the last inspection, the track record of

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improvement to a nursery of outstanding performance shows that the capacity to sustain excellence is very secure.

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

- Increase children's knowledge and awareness of more distant places, by:
  - planning more frequent opportunities for children to explore places that are far away, and
  - proceeding as soon as practically possible with the planned partnership with the nursery in Finland, helping children to learn about the differences and similarities in children's lifestyles there.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

**1**

Children achieve exceptionally well and thoroughly enjoy their learning. Their experiences on entry are varied and their range of skills, including in social and emotional development, is very wide. However, for many, attainment on entry is quite low. Owing to outstanding teaching, based on a good curriculum and excellent care, children learn very quickly. They settle effectively, behaving extremely well as they engage in the broad range of activities available. Progress is often very rapid indeed so, by the time children leave, attainment across the areas of learning often exceeds age-related targets. This was seen when a group settled outdoors around the sand tray, playing with plastic letter shapes. Immediately, an adult came to them and asked a series of questions that resulted in the children picking out letters to represent their names. Very quickly they began to increase their knowledge of letter sounds and spelling. Several of them also successfully traced the shapes of letters in the sand. A child who is learning English as an additional language was equally well absorbed as all the other children and progressed very well. At the same time, the children shared the letters very amicably and soon began to enjoy helping each other.

On another occasion, a group clicked and dragged screen images across the interactive whiteboard, ordering and matching figures and shapes that they saw in windows. This activity was particularly challenging as it required a response within a given time. It was very noticeable how each child improved their skills as they tried to beat the limit. Again, an adult ensured good uses of vocabulary whilst asking pertinent questions directed to individual children's needs and differing abilities. Such skilful teaching was frequently apparent throughout the inspection. It constantly contributed to enhanced rates of progress, honing and focusing children's skills and enjoyment across all areas of learning, indoors and in the extensive and richly resourced outside area. Children, irrespective of their ethnic heritages, achieve equally well as all other pupils as all children receive similarly very strong support to ensure very rapid rates of progress.

Other outcomes are also strong and include some that are outstanding. For example, children's good attendance, coupled with outstanding learning and progress across many basic skills, including rapidly developing confidence in their use of information and communication technology, means that children are outstandingly well prepared for the next stage in their education. They are also extremely willing to cooperate with adults and with each other, take turns very effectively, show their wonder and excitement in new things and discoveries, and are tolerant and willing to hear about each other's different

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backgrounds and cultural experiences. Furthermore, they greatly enjoy any opportunity to sing or chant rhythmically at appropriate points in stories and to make objects or little artefacts or models of their own. Contributions to the local community are particularly strong and include, for example, a fruit stall run in conjunction with the local Primary Care Trust and opportunities to plant and grow daffodil bulbs for the Marie Curie charity. However, contributions beyond the immediate locality are less well established.

*These are the grades for children's outcomes*

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: Children's attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
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
<b>The extent to which children feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Children's behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: Children's attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

All the staff are fully involved as key practitioners, taking responsibility for groups, observing needs and outcomes and recording progress in individual learning profiles. As a result, each child receives individualised teaching, care and support based on their own targets that are frequently checked and assessed. If an individual child's progress appears to slow down it is therefore spotted quickly. Reasons are sought and discussed with everyone, including parents and carers. Based on such information, targets are adjusted. Great care is then taken to guide and support children individually. In this way, what is taught and how it is taught are constantly adapted to meet different needs, including those of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Rates of learning and progress are thus constantly monitored and maximised. Where these procedures are less

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successful, further advice is sought from experts and outside agencies. The nursery is also part of a programme supporting disadvantaged two-year-olds in the children's centre. Provision in the school's own designated children's centre, psychologists, speech therapists and medical services are key elements. By working alongside such experts, the staff acquire new techniques themselves. The result is a very skilful staff team able to support all children. The children's centre provides a breakfast- and after-school club, which is appreciated by those parents whose children attend them. These clubs offer extended day care for 12 children who attend the nursery full-time. This provision meets all statutory safeguarding and health and safety requirements, as does the nursery itself.

The curriculum and the resources to teach it are good. The outdoor provision is particularly inspiring. During the inspection, there were at least twenty distinct activities set up in this environment, which provided great richness in role play and opportunities to develop language and vocabulary. These ranged from washing clothes in a water tray, via a vegetable plot, to a toy twin barbecue and related utensils. All of this served children very effectively, including those who speak English as an additional language, as opportunities to acquire associated vocabulary were promoted highly skilfully by the adults. That said, there was little that might inspire ideas and learning about children in other countries or even more rural areas of the United Kingdom. Senior leaders had themselves identified this and had begun planning to rectify it. Visits to local shops and parkland enrich the curriculum and enhance learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The whole staff, including teachers, early years practitioners and support staff, take on a wide range of extra responsibilities to drive improvements and contribute their expertise. Safeguarding checks are carried out frequently in a systematic and thoroughly effective way. However, minor errors of an administrative nature were found in paperwork, so safeguarding was not quite exemplary. Nevertheless, it proved possible to correct these on the same day. The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher, together with the governing body, have built an excellent team spirit and shared determination to build on past successes. This has secured continued improvement. As a result, excellence in care, guidance and support has been maintained since the last inspection and even added to, through the involvement of a governing body steering group. A much improved assessment system and highly effective and careful monitoring of teaching and learning have resulted in them improving to outstanding levels. All teachers and practitioners reach

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out to parents and carers to establish an outstanding partnership to the benefit of the children. A parent stated, 'They are very good at keeping parents informed. They always seem to be willing to give you time.' Inspectors saw this happening in the morning before school and at lunchtime. This willingness to listen to parents and carers and address their concerns is a major factor in the school's determined and outstanding promotion of equal opportunities, as it extends to families of all different backgrounds and ethnicities equally. It results in gaining the trust of the community and a steady flow of useful information, so barriers to learning can be tackled with determination. Efforts to promote community cohesion in the locality are particularly strong, but senior leaders agree that not enough is yet done in wider contexts to extend childrens' horizons. Plans are underway to achieve this.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Getting on for a half of parents and carers returned a questionnaire which is above average and their responses indicated that they are delighted with what the nursery provides. Every single one and those who were spoken to directly agree that their children enjoy attending; feel safe; and that unacceptable behaviour is dealt with effectively. Everyone also indicated their happiness with the experiences provided for children at the nursery and no one disagreed when asked whether it is well led and managed. Furthermore, a large majority strongly agreed with most of these statements. A very small minority expressed some disagreement, but none strongly. No pattern of dissatisfaction emerged for inspectors to investigate. Neither senior leaders nor the governing body display any complacency about this outcome. On the contrary, they expressed their desire to improve the nursery even further.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Abbey Wood 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 120 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	86	7	14	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	69	14	29	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	47	24	49	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	45	25	51	0	0	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	26	53	22	45	0	0	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	51	23	47	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	57	19	39	1	2	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	47	23	47	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	47	24	49	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	43	28	57	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	45	24	49	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	27	55	21	43	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	61	19	39	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 all 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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



25 May 2011

Dear Children

**Inspection of Abbey Wood Nursery School, London SE2 0SX**

I thoroughly enjoyed my time with you when I visited your school. You were all very helpful and behaved well. It was great to see your work, talk to you and watch your play. It was wonderful to hear so many of you say that Abbey Wood is an exciting and happy place. Mrs Arora and I found that your nursery is very good indeed, and so we call it an 'outstanding' school. Here is a list with some of the things that are outstanding about your school.

- By the time you leave, when you are four years old, your work is above what is expected for your age.
- You make very fast progress because the adults teach you exceptionally well.
- It is great that so many of you say the adults look after you brilliantly and you feel completely safe in the nursery.
- You are pleased and excited about the new things that you learn. You try hard to do what is right. You work and play together in a very friendly way, which helps you all to learn, and you are very willing to learn from each other about your backgrounds and cultures.
- The staff work very closely with your parents and carers to help you make fast progress.
- The governors at Abbey Wood work as a great team, together with the headteacher and the staff. Their ideas to make Abbey Wood even better are excellent.

Here is something that all of you, adults and children, can do to improve your nursery further.

- Extend the excellent way that you find out about and help people who live locally into linking up with people who live far away and in other countries.

You can all help your school by carrying on working and playing well together. I hope that you will always enjoy learning as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely

John W Paull

Lead inspector

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