

# Somerset Nursery School

157 Battersea Church Road, London, SE11 3ND

**Inspection dates** 30 September–1 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Leadership is outstanding. This is because the headteacher and governors have a clear vision for the school that has built on previously good practice. They set high standards for early years practice and what the Nursery offers, constantly driving improvements to teaching and children's achievement.
- Children's achievement is outstanding. Children of all abilities and backgrounds settle quickly and make rapid gains in their learning and development. They leave the Nursery demonstrating skills and abilities above those typical for their age.
- Teaching is outstanding because adults work effectively as a close team in developing their skills in understanding about how young children learn. They continuously share information about children's needs, interests and achievements, and use this in their planning. This ensures that children make rapid gains in their learning.
- The support and guidance for disabled children and those who have special educational needs and their families is strong.
- The carefully organised areas and focus on developing safe and trusting relationships result in excellent behaviour and regular attendance. They also contribute strongly to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The governing body is well informed about the work of the school. Governors have an effective focus on ensuring that children achieve well in a safe and stimulating environment and build a strong foundation for future learning.
- Parents speak highly of the school and the way in which it helps their children to develop the confidence and the skills they need to achieve well in their next school.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed across all four learning sessions, both indoors and outdoors, half with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. The inspector talked to children about their learning, observed their interactions with adults and each other, and scrutinised a range of work, including children's learning records known as 'learning stories'.
- Children were observed working with adults, in groups and independently.
- During the inspection, children were observed learning about the sounds that letters make (phonics). Some time was spent reviewing the experiences of children with special educational needs. Behaviour was observed throughout the day, both indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector looked at documentation such as policies including those related to safeguarding, behaviour and children with additional needs. The school's development planning, minutes of meetings, governors' reports, and information about children's progress and attendance, and how this is reported to parents, were also checked.
- Discussions were held with members of the governing body, staff and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of 21 responses to the online Parent View survey and the school's own surveys. The inspector also talked to a wide range of parents during the inspection. In addition, nine responses from staff were also taken into account.

## Inspection team

Narinder Dohel, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized Nursery school.
- It is situated within a children's centre that provides for children from birth to four years and their families, and separately, for two-year-olds. These are also led and managed by the headteacher and governing body.
- This inspection focused on the education of children aged three to four who attend the Nursery school.
- Currently, 31 of the 76 places are taken by children attending full time. A further 12 children attend the Nursery in the morning only and six for the afternoon only.
- Children attending the school are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Approximately 52% of children speak English as an additional language, many of whom are at early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled children and those with special educational needs, supported at early years action, is above average. The proportion supported at early years action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above the national average. Most of these have speech and communication difficulties.
- No children are entitled to pupil premium (funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after) because of their age. However, approximately a third of children are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- In the last 12 months, the Nursery school has worked with Roehampton University, hosted visits for local and overseas early years practitioners, and supported the local authority school-centred initial teacher training programme. The headteacher also works with local Nursery school headteachers and Belleville Primary, a local teaching school.

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

- Work in partnership with local schools and settings, as well as those further afield, to develop high-quality early years practice.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- The vision and ambition of the headteacher and governors is shared by all members of staff. This is focused on building on previously good achievements so that children make rapid gains in their reading, writing and numeracy skills as well as the other areas of learning.
- They are determined to ensure that children develop the skills, curiosity and resilience that will give them a strong foundation beyond their Nursery school experience. This has resulted in outstanding achievement for children and outstanding teaching.
- A robust system of setting targets for staff and training is linked closely to the school's priorities and shared with governors. This is one of the ways in which adults are helped to develop their teaching and leadership skills. It ensures that teaching is ambitious and children's achievement outstanding.
- Staff are helped to access and achieve a range of further training and professional qualifications in how young children learn as well as developing their leadership skills. As a result, more staff are becoming adept at identifying opportunities for, and extending, children's creative thinking and problem-solving skills. Morale is high and contributes strongly to the outstanding practice across the Nursery.
- The school's own evaluation of its work and plans for further improvement demonstrate that leaders accurately assess the strengths of the Nursery.
- Parents highly praise the work of the school. They value the opportunities, such as workshops, which the school provides for families to help their children's learning. Parents say that they receive enough information about their child's needs and achievements. Reports sent home to parents are of a high quality and clearly show the gains children have made during their time at Somerset Nursery.
- Children are excited by, and thoroughly enjoy, their learning. The areas taught provide excellent opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, that underpin all aspects of children's development exceptionally well. These have a good impact on children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- A wide range of trips and visits support learning especially well. These, combined with learning that develops life skills such as going to the post office to post a letter and understanding aspects of the life cycle through hatching ducks, are typical of how children are helped to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- The school consistently promotes equality of opportunity, fosters good relationships and tackles discrimination. Children and adults have made a series of photographic books with themes such as 'respect' and 'listening'. Children have an excellent understanding of the needs and choices of others.
- The headteacher and staff have started sharing their expertise and approach with colleagues in other schools locally and more widely. They see this as an area to be further developed.
- The local authority provides support through a termly visit as it considers the school to be a leader of exemplary practice.
- Safeguarding practices are extremely secure. Senior leaders regularly undertake checks beyond the statutory requirements of their safeguarding procedures. All relevant policies relating to keeping children safe and healthy are regularly reviewed.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- Governors bring a range of skills and experience that are relevant to the work of the school in the areas of education and finance. Minutes show that they closely check priorities in the school development plan and ask important questions. As a result, they are able to provide a good balance of support and challenge to the headteacher to ensure the quality of teaching and children's achievement are outstanding. They spend time in the school getting to know the children, staff and families. They seek training to ensure that they are up to date and guidance when setting targets for their headteacher. They are informed about the quality of teaching and have policies that make clear how the work of staff is recognised and underperformance addressed. Governors have undertaken relevant safeguarding training to ensure that safeguarding requirements are well met.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of children is outstanding. Children have excellent attitudes to their learning and are absorbed for long periods of time in their chosen activity by themselves, with other children and with

adults. Adults spend a great deal of time showing and explaining to children how to develop relationships, show consideration for one another and how to solve conflicts appropriately.

- Children with social, emotional, behavioural or special educational needs are expertly supported in taking a full part in all the Nursery has to offer. Space, resources and activities are designed to ensure that the needs of all children are being met.
- Children really enjoy coming to school. The school makes considerable efforts to ensure that families understand the importance of regular attendance and getting to school on time. As a result, attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now good.
- Parents, governors and staff rightly agree that children's behaviour is excellent in school and on trips and visits.

## **Safety**

- The school's work to keep children safe and secure is outstanding. There is a great emphasis on settling children and helping them to play together and share. Adults quickly and gently talk to children showing and explaining safe behaviours such as turn-taking on a range of climbing equipment or stopping at the zebra crossing to let others pass. This results in safe and trusting relationships between children and between children and adults.
- Children are helped to develop their understanding of health, safety and well-being. They know about washing hands before and after mealtimes or snack-times and how to care for the small creatures they look for and study indoors and in the outdoors.
- Not only does the school meet statutory requirements for safeguarding but also undertakes additional checks and training which provide greater detail about the school's work in this area. Risk assessments for activities in and around, as well as beyond, the school are undertaken regularly and rigorously.

## **The quality of teaching**

**is outstanding**

- Teaching over time is outstanding because staff have a strong understanding of how children learn. This is reflected in the increase in the proportion of children leaving the Nursery ready for the Reception Year.
- All adults working with children have high expectations. They consistently challenge children to develop their skills, knowledge and curiosity. Adults spend a great deal of time with individual and small groups of children in sharing books and developing early reading skills. In one session, a small group of children were helped by an adult to use information books to answer some of their questions and find out even more about their rabbit's diet and habitat.
- Every opportunity to develop children's understanding and use of numbers, space and measures is made the most of, whatever they are doing or learning about. In one activity, children learned about size and scale by first, making models and pictures of dinosaurs before moving on to larger models. They created recipes that involved counting and measuring in the mud kitchen and used the language of direction on the road system outdoors.
- At the end of each day, adults meet and plan the next steps of learning. This makes sure rapid progress is maintained and contributes to the overall checks of children's learning needs. The significant steps children make in their learning are starting to be recorded in individual books called learning stories so that children and families can also recognise their achievements. These are a relatively new addition to the school's work, and the range and consistency of quality of these is continually reviewed.
- Daily small-group sessions help children to acquire literacy and numeracy skills through songs, rhymes, stories and games. These also help children build confidence in their ability to communicate and develop their social skills.
- Staff are extremely knowledgeable about children's development, particularly for those who are disabled, have special educational needs or need help settling into a new environment. They adapt situations quickly, preventing anxiety, because they know the children exceptionally well.
- Families are encouraged to support their children at home and through homework activities such as sharing books, games and puppets.

## **The achievement of pupils**

**is outstanding**

- Many children enter the Nursery with skills and knowledge below that typically expected for their age. Since the last inspection, achievement has improved so that children make rapid and sustained progress in all areas of their learning and development. As a result, by the time they leave the Nursery, their skills are at or above what would be nationally expected.
- Staff make home visits before children start Nursery, meet with parents and families, and gather information about the children's needs and interests. This information is used particularly effectively to ensure that the environment is appropriate for children to make an exceptionally safe and strong start to their education.
- Some of this information is recorded in children's learning stories. These, along with daily evaluations and the school's checks on children's progress, show consistent examples of how, when and where children make rapid gains in their learning.
- All children develop their social and communication skills extremely well. Activities stem from their interests and are adapted by children and adults as their knowledge and understanding, confidence and creativity develop during the session.
- There are excellent opportunities for children to develop their early skills of reading, writing and mathematics through play. Often, all three in any one activity. They begin to write letters and words, for example, when labelling their models of dinosaurs or observational drawings of leaves. Similarly, they develop number, sorting and counting skills when hiring a scooter from the garage, or language and social skills in devising games with their friends.
- The indoor and outdoor areas, such as the mud kitchen, large sand areas and road systems, provide excellent opportunities for all children to demonstrate their creative, imaginative and physical skills.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs are extremely well supported by staff and visiting specialists so that they also make rapid and sustained progress.
- Children new to English also make rapid progress because adults effectively model language consistently, engage children in conversation and develop language through songs and rhymes. As a result, children show confidence and independence.
- The needs of more-able children are also planned for and met so that they also make good progress. At story time, one group of children were successfully practising letter sounds and blends, and linking them to words they knew.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100992
<b>Local authority</b>	Wandsworth
<b>Inspection number</b>	447899

This 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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–4
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	80
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dudley Rees
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louisa Halls
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21–22 September 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7223 5455
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