

Tanglewood Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	114698
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	378907
Inspection dates	12–13 July 2012
Lead inspector	Geof Timms

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 of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann Davison
Headteacher	Susan Sutton
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2009
School address	Melbourne Avenue Chelmsford CM1 2DX
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Age group	3–4
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Introduction

Inspection team

Geof Timms

Additional Inspector

Kanwaljit Singh

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Twenty-two teaching sessions, or parts of sessions, were observed, covering all parts of the school and different times of the school day. Meetings were held with staff, parents and carers and two representatives of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the tracking of children's progress and curriculum planning documents. Policies and documents relating to safeguarding and records of children's work were scrutinised. The inspectors also analysed completed questionnaires from staff and 125 parents and carers.

Information about the school

Tanglewood Nursery School is much larger than the average nursery school. It serves Chelmsford although some children attend from a much wider area. The school has a pre-school speech and language centre which is part of the nursery provision. The majority of the school population is White British. There are a small number of children from minority ethnic backgrounds and few are learning English as an additional language. The nursery offers a 15-hour week as standard to 180 children. Children attend either a morning or an afternoon session. An above average proportion of the children are disabled or have special educational needs, mainly associated with speech and languages difficulties. There are 49 children at Early Years action plus and three current statements of educational need.

The school has links to the Chelmsford West Children's Centre. This is inspected and reported on separately.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. Children are exceptionally well cared for and this helps them make outstanding progress in a safe, happy and vibrant environment. Developing their independence and responsibility is at the very heart of the school’s work. Children rapidly grow into confident learners and are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Children from all groups, including those who are disabled or with special educational needs, achieve exceptionally well from starting points that are often well below those expected for their age. By the time that they leave attainment is very high, especially in their personal, social and emotional development; their speech and language skills and in their physical skills.
- Outstanding teaching leads to children making outstanding progress in all six areas of learning. A major strength of the teaching is the adult-child interactions during child-initiated learning or in one-to-one situations. The school ensures children are able to follow their own interests while taking part in carefully planned activities. Although there is much excellent assessment carried out more remains to be done to provide specific opportunities to assess children’s progress at different points, especially in number.
- All staff work hard to give consistent messages to children about how they are expected to behave, and this is so successful that social and behavioural matters have a very low profile in the day-to-day running of the school. Children behave exceptionally well and develop very mature social skills. They feel safe and secure. Their enjoyment is apparent in their very positive attitudes towards learning.
- The leadership of teaching and management of performance are outstanding. The headteacher’s leadership is excellent. All members of staff say they are proud to work at the school. The outstanding curriculum has a major impact on promoting children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The

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governing body is very supportive but also holds the leaders to account in all aspects of their work through a very well organised series of monitoring activities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Staff should provide more regular, planned activities to help track and assess children's progress, especially in number, at different stages of their learning.

Main report**Achievement of pupils**

Children enter the nursery with skills and knowledge well below those expected for their age in all six areas of learning. The school provides for all abilities extremely effectively, including those in the speech and language centre, and children make outstanding progress in all of the areas of learning. This is also the view of all parents and carers. One wrote, 'This is an amazing school - my little girl loves it and I am at ease knowing she is in safe hands.'

Disabled children and those with special educational needs, including those in the speech and language centre, make excellent progress because of focused and well-planned one-to-one support, and because of the inclusive way that they are supported to join in with all activities. All of the children accept and respect each other and they play and work cooperatively together. Boys and girls make equally outstanding progress because the range of activities and adult interactions support the learning of all groups of children very successfully. The school's effective tracking systems help them recognise quickly any gaps in learning. They work hard to narrow such gaps for each individual child and to quickly address any weaknesses by carefully planning their next steps. Displays of children's work are used well to illustrate learning. For example, excellent creative work based around the recent trip to a beach has a high profile throughout the school.

The school is especially effective at promoting children's personal, social and emotional development and their physical development. Children settle quickly at the start of the day and immediately find friends and activities to enjoy without direct adult help. The staff interventions are extremely effective in developing children's speaking and listening skills to a high level. Outdoors children have a range of learning opportunities that help develop all areas of learning, from riding wheeled toys, to more imaginative activities such as in the 'thinking' houses during role play. The recent addition of a new 'wild' area has enabled staff to develop a wider range of outdoor learning and forest school activities such as building a fire-pit. Children develop finer skills through activities such as cutting, drawing, painting and using a hammer and nails on wood.

Quality of teaching

All parents and carers are confident that the school teaches their children well, and

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that they are well looked after. The staff make a very strong, knowledgeable and effective team. This has a clear impact on the excellent relationships between the children and adults, and the effectiveness with which children learn. The teachers, nursery nurses and learning support assistants ensure that there is an outstanding range of adult-led and child-initiated experiences so that children develop their independence as well as learning new skills and knowledge at a very good rate. The exploration of how different materials can combine, and what happens when they do, was a focus of much interest. Children enthusiastically talked about how they were 'experimenting.' The resulting 'gloop' offered excellent opportunities for children to use their hands to explore and observe these changes. Such worthwhile activities have a positive impact on children's outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The staff put a high priority on encouraging independence and individual responsibility. They make resources accessible to children so they are able to make decisions about appropriate equipment to use, or what area of the nursery indoors or out that they want to experience. Staff work very hard and closely together to plan and prepare each session so that all children benefit from high quality learning opportunities. In addition, excellent one-to-one or small group sessions support the more able children, and those with disabilities or special educational needs, including speech and language difficulties. For example, a group of able children discussed the story of and reacted imaginatively to a story about a lighthouse keeper. Staff interventions are thoughtful and extremely effective in extending children's learning and thinking skills. For example, in one session an adult's questions helped a child with special educational needs to learn to listen carefully and recognise a variety of shapes. Observations and the assessment of children's learning, including those 'wow' moments, help monitor learning in depth and ensure their next steps are well planned. Staff observations of learning inform 'learning journey' books which contain a wide range of assessments and observations as well as samples of work and input from home. For some activities, however, and especially in number, the staff do not always plan sufficient focused opportunities to enable them to fully assess all children's different stages of learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is outstanding and children make excellent progress in their personal and moral development because of the consistent emphasis on these aspects in all activities. Learning in all areas is enhanced because of the children's excellent attitudes towards school. All parents and carers say their children feel safe and are well behaved at school. Without removing the excitement of exploring new learning, especially physically, staff are vigilant in observing and tracking children's activities to eliminate unnecessary risks.

Children are very happy and are relaxed in the nursery. Attendance is improving and often above average. Parents and carers are clearly aware of the importance of habits of regular attendance even at this early age. Children quickly adapt to the presence of new adults and very proudly share their work and play. A major aspect of this work is the use of 'treasure boxes.' These are small boxes in which children

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keep items of personal interest or meaning and which nobody else can look at without the child's permission. One girl very excitedly wanted to share her box with an inspector. On another occasion a boy shared his box with two friends who showed tremendous levels of respect for his objects. These boxes have a massively positive impact on children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children's behaviour contributes well to their learning and there are no incidents or records of any bullying of any type, or unsafe behaviour.

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers have been successful in maintaining and building on the outstanding standards and provision noted at the time of the last two inspections, including through changes to the senior leadership. Improvements to the tracking of children's progress have been very successfully introduced. These now enable staff to more easily recognise underachievement or to highlight the next steps for children's learning. Along with other outstanding features of the school's work, this shows that continual improvement is part of the school's ethos. The assessments are made accurately and in some detail. However, at times opportunities to provide specific tasks that will show how well children have learned a new skill or concept, especially in number, are missed.

Arrangements for children starting school are very effective and all children quickly settle. Home visits help staff become quickly familiar with children, their likes and dislikes and pre-school learning, and with their family circumstances. Staff regularly take part in training to extend their knowledge and skills. A recent excellent example of this has been the work done to develop children's creative thinking skills. Links with the local creative partnership were used very successfully in a project on maps and mapping.

The headteacher and senior staff monitor the work of all staff very effectively through regular and detailed observations. The governors ensure their training supports their understanding of the work of the school, and they successfully support and challenge its work through regular visits and an effective committee structure. The school's self-evaluation is very accurate and its development planning has an appropriate focus on the important issues for improvement.

The school promotes children's equality of opportunity well. The nursery is a tolerant and harmonious community where children are free from discrimination and harm. Assessment is used very effectively to track individual children's attainment on entry, their regular progress in all areas of learning, and their final attainment when leaving the school. The outstanding curriculum supports the school's ethos of developing children's independence. All areas of learning are covered with a rich and wide range of activities and experiences. These include visits out of school, such as a recent whole-school visit to a beach, that resulted in some excellent creative work, and a widening of their knowledge and understanding of the world. Throughout all of these activities safety has a high priority, and the school leaders and governing body ensure all safeguarding requirements are met.

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 pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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 pupils. 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



16 July 2012

Dear Children

Inspection of Tanglewood Nursery School, Chelmsford, CM1 2DX

Thank you for being very kind and friendly to the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We especially enjoyed the way you loved showing us what you were learning and how you loved exploring the 'gloop.' You go to an outstanding school and that means that you learn a lot and enjoy yourselves.

These are the things I liked most.

- You are able to work very independently to learn lots of new things and make outstanding progress.
- You behave really well and look after each other.
- The teachers plan lots of exciting things for you to do so you can explore the world together.
- You get on really well together, and talk to and listen to others, especially with your treasure boxes.
- You are happy in the nursery and are very independent, and this helps you to learn really well.
- Your parents and carers think you are doing very well, and we agree with them.
- The adults plan for all of your needs very well and they understand when you need extra support or an extra challenge.

We have asked the school to do one thing to make your learning even better.

- Give you more chances to show your learning especially in number so teachers know how successful their teaching has been.

We hope you carry on enjoying your learning and making good progress. Enjoy your time at Tanglewood and keep working hard and playing as well as you can!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms
Lead inspector

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