

Martenscroft Nursery School & Sure Start Children's Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105384
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	355768
Inspection dates	7–8 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Clare Henderson

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	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Mary Metcalfe
Headteacher	Mrs Katharine Coates-Mohammed
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2008
School address	33 Epping Street Boundry Lane, Hulme Manchester, Greater Manchester M15 6PA
Telephone number	0161 2261266
Fax number	0161 2329677
Email address	admin@martenscroft.manchester.sch.uk

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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Fourteen sessions or parts of sessions were observed involving the three teachers and all teaching assistants. Meetings were held with senior staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors spoke to parents and carers, observed the school's work, and looked at children's records and profiles, school assessments, planning and school policies, including those concerning the safeguarding of children. The 37 questionnaires returned by parents or carers were analysed. Staff also completed a questionnaire.

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

- How well children are supported, challenged and involved in their learning.
- How well the indoor and outdoor provision enables children to develop into independent, safe and happy learners.
- The quality of planning and assessment in identifying next steps in learning.
- How well adults review the quality of provision and children's achievement.

Information about the school

This nursery school is similar in size to others of its type. The proportions of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, from minority ethnic groups, and at an early stage of learning English are above average. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The school has gained the Eco School Bronze award.

Day care, available on a full or part-time basis for children aged from six months to three years, and the after-school provision were inspected as part of this inspection.

A children's centre, managed by the headteacher and senior leadership team, operates within the school. This was subject to a separate inspection. A report relating to its work can be found on the Ofsted website.

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

This is an outstanding school which has successfully extended the outstanding status it received at the last inspection. This is because all strands of provision provide exemplary levels of care, nurture and support essential for children to thrive and flourish. Each child is fully included in what is offered and, together with their parents and carers, cared for as an individual. The school plays a central and crucial part within the community and is highly valued by parents and carers. They are unanimous in saying that they are happy with their children's experience at the school and that their children enjoy school. One parent, reflecting the views of many wrote, Martenscroft is an outstanding model of child-care provision.'

All the children, including the babies in 'Palm Room', love school and make outstanding progress in all areas of learning. They achieve very well from starting points that are generally below expected levels and often low in social and communication skills. Such is the high quality of their achievement that by the time they move to their Reception classes, in a range of local schools, their skills surpass expectations and many are well on the way to achieving the goals expected at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Each day, children thoroughly enjoy choosing from a wide and highly varied range of exciting activities, both indoors and out. These allow the children to learn and develop exceptionally well. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and their behaviour is outstanding. The staff are always at hand to promote learning further by showing children how to draw the very best from the exciting activities.

The headteacher's and senior leaders' thoughtful and inspirational management continues to underpin the success of all provision. There is accurate and rigorous evaluation of all aspects of school planning and children's achievement. This leads to actions that are well-considered and effective in seeking to refine provision. A very strong and experienced team of practitioners makes a valuable contribution to the development and success of the school. The contribution of the governing body to supporting and challenging the school, particularly in ensuring children are safeguarded, is outstanding. However, a few governors, because they are new to role, are yet to fully monitor the curriculum. The school's actions have resulted in, for example, the improvement in rates of children's attendance and in their overall attainment found at the last inspection. As a result of these strengths, the school has an outstanding capacity to sustain this high level of performance.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide training for governors, new to role, to enable them to become more involved in monitoring the curriculum.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

1

One parent of a baby in day care said, 'As soon as she sees the school sign she waves her arms and legs to show how happy she is to be here'. Similarly, older children run eagerly into the Nursery classes each morning. They play and learn happily on their own or with others, and children from different cultures and backgrounds play together harmoniously. All children, including the babies, are very active in their learning and are given a wide range of opportunities to explore and investigate indoors and in the highly stimulating and secure outdoor environment. For instance, Nursery aged children were set a challenge to find a way to climb to the top of one of the tunnels. They tackled this very confidently, chatting and working with a partner; they found that if they built a platform they could then climb up whilst helping each other. Such activities are part of children's daily learning experiences and extend their thinking skills, cooperation and independence whilst involving them in their own learning very effectively. They are keen to learn and a very high priority is given to developing their English skills through well-planned and well-supported speaking and listening activities. All adults pay close attention to children's individual needs and quickly identify those who may show a delay in learning. They provide appropriate support through the excellent links they have with health agencies. This ensures that those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar outstanding progress to their classmates. By the time that they leave to join their Reception classes in a number of schools, they are confident and independent learners. Their achievement is outstanding.

Children are happy and secure, and attendance levels are above average. Children take excellent care of the nursery environment and treat each other with care and sensitivity. They are involved in making their daily snacks of fruit, and this enables them to learn about the importance of leading healthy lifestyles. Continuous opportunities to play outside strengthen their physical development and help them gain understanding of their own capabilities and how to play safely. Most children behave exceptionally well. Children know who to go to if they have a problem and that adults will sort it out. They make outstanding progress in their social, physical, creative and problem-solving skills because adults plan excellent opportunities for them to investigate and explore both within the school and the wider community. They learn about different cultures within the wider community through celebrating festivals occurring through the year. For instance, the Hindu festival of Holi was being celebrated during the inspection. They regularly raise money for worthy causes. This develops their concern and respect for others very effectively. Such activities prepare them exceptionally well for the future.

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These are the grades for children's outcomes

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

¹ 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?

The outstanding interaction between adults and children, combined with the extremely well thought-out organisation of the accommodation, curriculum and choice of resources, ensures that all aspects of the provision are of exceptionally high quality. Regular observations by staff inform them about children's particular interests and their achievements. All adults contribute to daily assessments which build into a comprehensive picture of each child's development in different strands of learning. These observations and assessments are used exceptionally well to plan ever more challenging tasks. Adults are skilled at intervening at appropriate moments to ask open questions which prompt children to think.

The main focus is on promoting learning through first-hand experience. Children's learning is greatly enhanced by a wide range of exciting visits for all children, including those in the baby room, to local museums, galleries, libraries and parks. These give the children an interest, knowledge and pride in their local community. This rich and creative mix of activities, many of which also include parents and carers so that they are helped to expand their understanding of how they can engage in their children's education, provide children with memorable experiences and a thirst for learning. Stunning outdoor provision ensures children have the space to enjoy a full range of exciting activities. Exceptional care has been taken to create a natural environment for children in the middle of urban

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living using sand and water play, dressing up, building and constructing, creating music, playing in dens, as well as digging and planting in the allotment area. This is an outstanding facility.

After-school and holiday provision is very much enjoyed by the children and appreciated by parents and carers, particularly in catering for their work schedules. Early identification of children's individual needs and very close working with outside agencies means that children receive first-rate support to help them thrive. Parents and carers of children with medical problems appreciate greatly the high levels of care their children receive. Adults excel at building up a comprehensive picture of each child in their care. In addition, there are outstanding arrangements, including the use of transition boxes for parents and carers and children to use to ensure children enjoy a smooth transition to local schools at the end of the summer term.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The extremely strong team of highly effective staff is totally committed to equality and diversity, celebrating the individual qualities of each child and their family. Teamwork is strong and sophisticated monitoring and evaluation procedures successfully drive improvement. The governing body has a clear understanding of the nursery's strengths and areas of development. Governors are very supportive of the nursery and equally effective in holding it to account. However, there has not been enough time for recently appointed governors to develop their role in monitoring the curriculum. There is a close partnership with parents and carers who are rightly effusive in their comments about how they are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. These very strong links with parents ensure the personal needs of the children are addressed extremely well. Resources are very well deployed and the nursery provides excellent value for money. Safeguarding procedures are outstanding, policies are comprehensive and procedures ensure children are protected and supported very effectively. Training for all staff is first class, as is the quality of all risk assessments.

There are very strong links with a wide range of external agencies which contribute to children's outstanding progress and well-being. The ethnic and cultural diversity of families is celebrated and community cohesion is promoted very strongly within the school community and beyond the immediate locality, outside the United Kingdom and within the wider world.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Views of parents and carers

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Martenscroft Nursery School & Sure Start Children's Centre 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 inspector received 37 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 52 pupils registered at the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

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In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

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Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	86	5	14	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	78	8	22	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	70	9	24	0	0	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	76	8	22	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	27	73	9	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	68	10	27	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	73	9	24	1	3	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)	20	54	12	32	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	76	8	22	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	70	8	22	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	73	9	24	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	29	78	6	16	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	92	3	8	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



9 March 2011

Dear Children

**Inspection of Martenscroft Nursery School and Sure Start Children's Centre,
Greater Manchester M15 6PA**

We really enjoyed visiting you all at your nursery school. It was marvellous seeing how much you enjoy everything you do. You were so busy!

When you were playing outdoors, we were astonished at how much there was for you to do. I would have liked to have a go on the big drums but you were all playing and enjoying yourselves so much I did not want to disturb you.

Your parents and carers think your school is fantastic and we agree. It is outstanding. The grown-ups look after you all so well and give you so many things to do that I am not surprised you all love it.

We saw you all busily working, playing and learning lots of exciting new things. You are especially very good at doing things for yourselves and playing well with other children. Your behaviour is excellent and you get on very well together. You have lots of places to run around and explore in your outside area, as well as places to grow plants. It is good that your parents and carers have lots of chances to learn new things too, so that you can have fun together at home as well as at school. I think all of you need to give yourselves a clap for working and playing together so well.

Even when a school is as good as yours, there is always a way to make it even better. I have asked the grown-ups to help new members of the governing body to find out more about what you are learning as you play, so they can help you continue to enjoy school.

It is really great that you are all learning so well and I hope you carry on enjoying nursery school.

Yours sincerely

Clare Henderson

Lead Inspector

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