

Inspection of an outstanding school: Chelwood Nursery School

Chelwood Walk, Turnham Road, Brockley, London SE4 2QQ

Inspection date: 22 September 2021

Outcome

Chelwood Nursery School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Chelwood Nursery School is a wonderful place for children to come to learn. It is, in the words of one parent and carer, considered a 'gem in the community'. Children enjoy learning and feel safe. They like spending most of each day learning outside in the fresh air, whatever the weather. Staff are highly skilled in deciding how to support children and selecting activities for them to do.

Leaders have very high expectations for what children should achieve. They make sure every minute of the day includes opportunities to help children develop, think and try new things. Every activity that teachers set up for children has a reason for being there.

Children develop the confidence to become friends with each other and make their own decisions right from the start. They learn quickly to take turns and consider others. Staff know how to recognise and tackle signs of bullying but rarely need to use this knowledge.

Parents speak highly of the way staff include them in deciding how to teach their child. Teachers help children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) take a full part in learning so they can achieve as highly as others.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leadership and governance are strong and effective at Chelwood Nursery School. This means that parents can be confident that their child will continue to have an exceptional start to their education.

The curriculum is precisely planned and organised. Everyone is clear about what children are expected to learn. Leaders from other schools choose to learn from the exemplary curriculum at Chelwood. Teachers and support staff have the expertise they need to check how children are developing. They quickly adapt activities to help any children who are falling behind to catch up. Staff are equally skilled at adapting their approaches to support

children with SEND to learn exceptionally well. For example, they teach some children to use picture cards to explain how they are feeling.

Leaders have established opportunities for children to learn remotely when necessary. They adapted their approach so they could continue to complete home visits for children new to the nursery during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

Reading is at the heart of everything children do at this school. Teachers and support staff are very skilled at encouraging children to explore and enjoy books. They use stories with lots of rhyme and encourage children to use beat and rhythm. This helps children to learn how letters and words sound. Children who are new to reading are drawn in by books carefully chosen for their intriguing textures and shapes. Teachers position these books so that children notice and explore them.

Teachers introduce children to mathematical language straight away. They weave this into many activities, such as when children compare the sizes of their mud 'ice-cream' desserts.

Leaders understand how the pandemic has affected the starting points of some children. For example, they have identified that children's physical development was delayed when they had to spend a lot of time indoors. They are making sure that children catch up quickly.

Staff decide carefully when to step in to help children develop relationships with each other and when to stand aside and let them learn for themselves. In this way, children quickly learn to negotiate and cooperate. This also helps children to focus on their learning. Leaders listen to children's views when making decisions. They let children choose between buying some new toys or a new cupboard, for example. Teachers are quick to pick up when children act in a way which may indicate prejudice or stereotyping. They do this supportively, so children learn how to value diversity and equality.

Staff appreciate the safe space leaders provide for them to discuss their well-being and workload. They value leaders' openness when making difficult decisions about staffing. Staff work together to check on how well children are learning, which they said makes good use of their time.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have established trusting relationships with parents. This helps them uncover concerns at an early stage and discuss them frankly. Staff are thoroughly trained in identifying non-verbal signs of abuse. They know individual children so well that they notice when something does not seem right.

Leaders have effective links with external professionals and well-organised record-keeping. This means a picture of concerns over time is recorded and can be used to get the help a child may need.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in September 2011.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	100668
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	10200061
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	142
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Martha Mitchell
Acting headteacher	Amanda Furtado
Website	www.chelwood.lewisham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 September 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had been absent since May 2021. The deputy headteacher was acting as headteacher.
- The school includes provision for two-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, physical development and personal, social and emotional development.
- For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some children about their learning and looked at examples of children's work.

- Meetings were also held with the acting headteacher and other leaders, members of the governing body and two representatives of the local authority. Inspectors spoke with staff responsible for SEND and the designated safeguarding lead.
- Inspectors considered information recorded related to safeguarding. They also viewed curriculum plans and leaders' plans for improvement.
- Inspectors took into account responses to the Ofsted staff survey, written comments made by parents and responses to the Ofsted online Parent View survey. Inspectors spoke informally with some parents during the school day.

Inspection team

Andrew Wright, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sue Brooks

Ofsted Inspector

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