

The Chelsea Group of Children

St Andrew's Church, Waynflete Street, London SW18 3QG

Inspection dates	21–22 January 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- From exceptionally low levels of attainment and behaviour in their previous school, pupils make good progress.
- Teaching is good and is well focused on developing pupils' communication skills. Teaching staff and therapists work together well to support pupils' personal, social and emotional needs.
- All National Curriculum subjects are taught. This gives pupils a broad range of experiences that meets their needs and interests. Good focus on reading, writing and mathematics prepares pupils effectively in their basic skills.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and staff are skilled in taking a swift action to support pupils who get upset or who sometimes find it hard to behave appropriately in lessons.
- Links with parents are strong and they are given helpful information on their child's progress.
- Policies and procedures for pupils' welfare and safety are implemented effectively. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure in school.
- The director and the headteacher have high expectations and seek ways to improve the school. They have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching assistants do not always provide the support pupils need to make consistently good progress.
- New staff have received training in how to use and interpret information on pupils' progress but this has not been fully embedded in practice.
- Senior and middle leaders do not yet embedded the new monitoring framework to check the quality of teaching and learning to ensure all pupils make rapid progress.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupil achievement to outstanding by providing:
 - training for teaching assistants so that they are better equipped to support pupils' learning
 - training to new staff so that they know how to use assessment information to support and extend pupils' learning.

- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - making more regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning and pinpointing precisely what staff need to do to improve in order to speed up pupils' progress.
 - developing the role of middle leaders so that they take a more active role in monitoring and improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The school is well led by the school director and the headteacher. They have ensured that all staff are committed to meeting pupils' individual needs. As a result, pupils within a short time of joining the school are successfully integrated back into education. They make good progress from very low starting points both in terms of skills and behaviour.
- Staff have formed an effective partnership with parents so that they have a comprehensive understanding of pupils' interests, strengths and areas for development. Staff use this information, as well as their own in-depth checks on pupils' abilities, when pupils enter the school to devise an individual programme for each child. This helps pupils to achieve well both academically and personally.
- The school has been successful in creating a caring ethos where pupils' personal development is nurtured effectively. Leaders have high expectations and have the full backing of all staff. As a result, the needs of pupils with autism and other complex needs are met successfully.
- The leaders have made sure that the quality of teaching is good and as a result pupils make good progress. The occupational and speech and language therapists work alongside the teachers to support pupils' learning. Challenging targets are set for both academic and behavioural progress. Academic progress is compared with the national norms.
- Pupils' progress is tracked meticulously and this information is effectively used by staff to plan the next steps in their learning. However, some newly appointed staff do not use this information to plan work that is suitably challenging for all pupils.
- Regular meetings between senior leaders and the newly appointed middle leaders have ensured that middle leaders have made a good start on their areas of responsibilities. However, not all leaders have been sufficiently involved in monitoring and improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- The broad and balanced curriculum that is relevant to the needs of pupils has been well developed. Schemes of work are used effectively to implement individualised programmes to meet the very distinct and differing needs of pupils. Staff provide intensive support to develop pupils' communication and literacy and number skills.
- The school fosters pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Fundamental British values are actively promoted through taught subjects and through enrichment activities, such as visits to places of interest and participation in the celebration of religious festivals.
- Arrangements for managing the performance of staff are effective. Staff receive regular training concerning the implementation of a range of school policies and procedures. Procedures for the welfare, safety and security of pupils are strong. All policies are effectively implemented and updated as required, and are available to parents through the school's website.
- School leaders have good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Their evaluations are accurate and the priority areas for development are appropriate.
- Parents and staff are very happy with the school. Pupils are happy and form positive relationships with staff. The referring authorities are offered annual audited accounts in respect of the money they pay towards fees for each of their pupils. To date, this offer has not been taken up.
- Leaders have ensured that all independent standards are met for leadership and management.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The proprietor, who works in the school as the director, is very knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. She is highly committed to ensuring that the school provides the best education that meets pupils' needs.
 - The proprietor has the necessary skills and expertise to challenge and hold leaders to account to bring about further improvements. She uses the services of an educational consultant to undertake her performance management and to ensure that she receives appropriate advice for improving the work of the school.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet all statutory requirements. All staff have received training in how to support pupils to recognise the dangers of radicalisation. The designated safeguarding leads have received training to the required level. Checks on the suitability of the staff to work with the children are carried out rigorously.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching is good and because of the high pupil to staff ratio, enables pupils to fill in the gaps in their learning and to catch up. Most pupils in the school have had negative experiences of education. Staff have been successful in enabling them to enjoy their learning.
- Effective teaching has reduced the challenging behaviour that pupils first exhibit when they join the school. As a result, pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. They form trusting relationships with adults, which further motivates them to engage in their learning.
- There is a good focus on teaching literacy and numeracy skills. In one lesson, pupils had their photographs taken while they were dressed as superheroes and re-telling a story. The superheroes were hungry and they went to shop for food, but finding the shop closed, decided to eat their lunch in a pizza restaurant. Pupils enjoyed this activity hugely. In another lesson, pupils were learning to count to five and staff sang number rhymes with pupils to promote learning.
- Staff are well aware of the need to develop pupils' language, and take every opportunity to initiate and extend their communication skills. They support pupils' learning by the use of communication aids, such as visual pictorial clues, verbal prompts, gesturing and signing. They also immerse pupils in spoken language by continually explaining what they are doing. Pupils who cannot verbalise their needs are encouraged to use pictures and signing to explain their requirements. Pupils were seen pointing to pictures to ask for a 'drink' and 'more' rice.
- The therapists and teaching staff work closely together and this successfully improves pupils' personal development and academic learning.
- Behaviour management is effective and any signs of misbehaviour are quickly diffused so that the learning of others is not disrupted. Teaching assistants supervise pupils' behaviour well and make sure they have the materials and resources that they need in lessons. However, they are not always deployed effectively enough to extend pupils' academic learning.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities in art, music, geography, physical education (PE) and science. Literacy and numeracy skills are used effectively in other subjects. In one PE session, pupils had many opportunities to count their scores in the game of skittles and to verbalise their choices of equipment.
- Teachers use skilful questioning to check their pupils' understanding and deepen learning. This was seen in a science lesson, where pupils were enjoying finding out about the attraction and repellent forces of magnets.
- Staff check pupils' progress rigorously through daily activities, and weekly and termly tracking. Pupils' individual education plans are used to set challenging targets. The school's performance information indicates that pupils make good progress in all subject areas. Parents are given detailed information on their children's progress through comprehensive, annual written reports.
- All the independent school standards for teaching, learning and assessment are met.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Staff have worked hard to increase pupils' ability to maintain their interest in lessons. Therapists and other staff are skilled and proactive in supporting pupils who find it hard to concentrate or who get emotionally upset.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and rates of attendance are in line with those of maintained primary schools nationally. Absence occurs when pupils have to attend hospital for medical needs and have other medical appointments. Pupils come to school on time.
- All parents and staff who completed the online survey, Parent View, agree that pupils are safe, happy and well looked after. Pupils report that they feel safe and there is no bullying. If there are any small disagreements, they know they can go to any member of staff and these are sorted quickly.
- Older pupils know which school they are going to join when they leave this school. Some have already visited their schools. Good grounding in basic skills also prepares them well for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders have ensured that all policies and procedures are in place and the independent school standards for this aspect of the school are met.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They behave well in and around the school and when they visit the local park for their daily breaktime. The school is an orderly and calm place where pupils mostly work amicably. This is because staff know their pupils well, and timely help keeps learning going with little or no disruptions.
- There have been no exclusions. Parents are well informed about their children's progress in behaviour through the home diaries. Any incidents and accidents are recorded and reported promptly to parents.
- Leaders have ensured that a full range of policies and procedures are in place so that the independent school standards for this aspect of the school's work are met.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils make good progress from their very low starting points in both academic skills and in their behaviour. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' communication skills. The speech and language and occupational therapists support pupils well so that they start of the day well and are ready to learn. Together they plan activities to help pupils with their specific learning difficulties such as communication, sensory integration, and gross and fine motor coordination. As a result of this effective support, pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Older pupils are able to read simple books fluently and support younger pupils in buddy-reading sessions. They have good phonics knowledge and can link letters and sounds together to make words. The younger pupils enjoy sequencing pictures of the stories read to show their understanding.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics. For example, the most-able pupils were learning simple fractions and were able to use their knowledge of timetables to complete their sums. The younger and less-able pupils were seen learning numbers to five and were singing number rhymes to add one more and one less.
- Staff use National Curriculum levels in all subjects to assess pupils' learning. The school's assessment information from last three years indicates that most pupils make good progress. Leaders monitor pupils' behaviour and emotional health effectively, and information shows that most pupils make good progress.
- All the independent school standards are met for the outcomes for pupils and children.

Early years provision

is good

- There are currently two children on roll in the early years provision. Each follows an individualised curriculum tailored to their needs and abilities.
- It is not possible to comment on the outcomes or behaviour of children, as this would identify individual children.
- There are no matters of concern in the early years provision that differ from those identified in the main school.

School details

Unique reference number	131622
Inspection number	10008522
DfE registration number	212/6001

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Day special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	39
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Libby Hartman
Headteacher	Jessica Duemier
Annual fees (day pupils)	£29,550 to £51,855
Telephone number	020 8946 8330
Website	www.chelseachildren.com
Email address	information@chelseachildren.com
Date of previous inspection	5–6 December 2012

Information about this school

- The Chelsea Group of Children is an independent special school which offers day provision for 40 boys and girls aged between four and 11 years. Currently, there are 39 pupils on roll and there are more boys than girls. There are two children in the early years provision who attend the school full time.
- All pupils experience developmental delay and have mild to moderate and complex learning needs. Over half have a diagnosis of autism, with some having experienced considerable disruption to their education. There are 36 pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. Two have education, health and care (EHC) plans. The three pupils who do not have a statement of special educational needs are either funded by embassies or by parents themselves.
- The school has a team of six full-time therapists (three occupational and three speech and language therapists) who are part of the teaching team.
- The school opened in 1997, and in 2011 relocated to its current site, a residential area of south London. Pupils are placed at the school by a number of London boroughs.
- The school was last inspected in December 2012, when it was judged to be outstanding in all areas except pupils' welfare, health and safety, which was judged to be inadequate.
- In December 2013, the school received a monitoring visit at the request of the registration authority to check the progress made in meeting the independent school standards for pupils' welfare, health and safety. The inspection found that the school had made good progress and met all regulatory requirements.
- The school aims to 'meet each pupil's unique, developmental, behaviour and emotional needs and develop their cognitive abilities through the development of firm foundation of skills'.
- The school's motto is, 'I do not fear stormy seas for I have learned to sail my boat'.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspector visited all classrooms to observe teaching, learning and assessment. She observed 10 lessons and conducted a learning walk, all jointly with the headteacher. Teachers' planning, pupils' work, and information on their progress were analysed.
- Meetings took place with the proprietor (who is also the director of the school) and the headteacher. Meetings were also held with three middle leaders, including the leader for the six occupational and speech and language therapists.
- Inspector also talked to the school's consultant on the telephone.
- School policies and other documentation were examined on the website and other relevant policies in the school.
- Records of pupils' behaviour and attendance were reviewed. Pupils' behaviour was observed during lunchtimes.
- The inspector spoke with pupils about their learning and life in school.
- The inspector scrutinised pupils' work and their progress information tracked by the school, and the information given to parents.
- There were 27 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. These, along with comments made by one parent to the inspector, were considered.
- Inspector considered 27 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Kanwaljit Singh, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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