

The Chelsea Group of Children

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

Inspection dates

26–28 February 2019

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Leaders have significantly improved the school since the previous inspection. The proprietor, leaders and staff have ambitious expectations for all pupils.
- Pupils thrive because of the excellent care and commitment of the staff and high-quality teaching and therapies.
- School leaders have a sharp understanding of the effectiveness of all areas of the school's work. They are relentless in their pursuit of the best outcomes for pupils.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding. Teachers, teaching assistants and therapists work closely together. They know the pupils and their individual needs extremely well.
- Staff use this knowledge to create a bespoke programme of therapies and teaching. This enables pupils to engage positively and get the best out of their learning.
- The curriculum is skilfully tailored to pupils' social and emotional needs and to their abilities, talents and interests. Pupils enjoy the breadth of subjects and enrichment activities on offer.
- As pupils settle into the school, they make very strong progress across the subjects from their very low starting points.
- Leaders place great emphasis on pupils' welfare and well-being. Relationships between staff and pupils are highly positive. Consequently, pupils feel safe and secure and grow in confidence as they trust staff to take good care of them.
- First-rate behaviour support strategies ensure sustained improvements in pupils' ability to regulate their own behaviour.
- Parents and carers are extremely appreciative of the way the school addresses their children's therapeutic needs and re-engages them in learning. A few, however, feel that they do not have a clear enough understanding of how well their children are progressing academically.
- Leaders have ensured that the school is compliant with all the independent school standards.

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?

- Help parents to better understand how well their children are progressing across the academic subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher, proprietor and other leaders have created a culture of high aspiration and care. They work on the premise that, by therapists and teaching staff working closely together, pupils will make excellent progress.
- Leaders value all pupils and staff, and support them to achieve their best. Staff morale is high. Typically, one member of staff said:
 - 'Leaders value staff as professionals, and teamwork is evident in everything we do. The pupils present a challenge which we face together every day. We always work to improve how we can support each child in their school day while preparing them for their future lives.'
- School leaders have developed robust systems to evaluate the effectiveness of the quality of education that the school provides. Leaders use this information effectively to refine their practices and secure continual improvement so that pupils have outstanding outcomes.
- Leaders have developed a highly skilled and effective workforce. Leaders of the teaching, teaching assistants and therapist teams play a key role in training, developing and holding their teams to account. There is a very open culture of sharing good practice and training across the three teams. This means that teachers and teaching assistants have the skills to help pupils change their behaviours and participate positively in their lessons. Equally, therapists increase their pedagogical skills. All adults work seamlessly together in the best interests of the pupils. They help remove pupils' barriers to learning and support them in making substantial progress in their personal development and academic achievement.
- Pupils have a curriculum adapted to their diverse needs, encompassing all national curriculum subjects and giving them many experiences. Teachers effectively embed spiritual, moral, social and cultural education into their planned activities. Each year, leaders plan a central theme around which they plan a range of engaging activities that extend pupils' learning. This year, the theme is 'Around the world'. Pupils are learning about different countries and engaging in many enrichment activities. Examples of these include Irish dancing, French artists and practising pointillism in art lessons, African drumming, cooking national dishes and using yarn and tissue to make flags.
- Staff work very closely with parents. Parents who spoke with the inspector, and those that responded to the questionnaire, overwhelmingly had nothing but praise for the school. They welcomed the plentiful information that staff give them about their children's development and what they are learning. They confirmed that the school involves them in determining goals for their children and in reviewing their outcomes. A very small number of parents, however, said that they were not clear about how well their children are progressing academically.

Governance

- The sole proprietor, who is the founder of the school, has overall responsibility for all aspects of the school's work.
- The proprietor spends substantial time at the school. She works closely with all staff and

holds leaders to account for the school's performance. She makes effective use of external consultants to independently verify how well the school is performing.

- The proprietor makes sure that the school meets all the independent school standards.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders make sure that staff have regular training and frequent reminders of all aspects of safeguarding. Staff have a solid understanding of the range of potential safeguarding and welfare issues to which pupils may be vulnerable. They are vigilant and alert and immediately report any concerns, however small, should they arise.
- Leaders work closely with the local safeguarding teams and other external agencies across the boroughs in which the pupils live. They also work closely with parents to help them support their children's safety and welfare.
- The curriculum includes taking pupils into shops and the community and travelling on buses and trains to help pupils prepare for independent safe living. Visitors such as the police and workshops delivered by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children help pupils understand danger and how to stay safe.
- The school's website is in the process of being updated. Printed copies of its latest safeguarding policy are available at the school office. The policy takes proper regard to current government requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers, teaching assistants and therapists know pupils exceptionally well. They use assessment information to carefully work out together bespoke therapies and learning activities that best meets pupils' needs.
- Teachers and other adults are highly skilled in managing pupils' behaviour. They refocus and support pupils who go off-task.
- There is a very strong emphasis on developing pupils' speech and language skills. Pupils access a variety of communication methods to support their learning, which include signing, symbol support and using objects of reference. Occupational therapists help pupils develop their gross and fine motor skills, as well as their social skills. Evidence in pupils' work and the school's rigorous assessment strategies confirm that pupils' academic achievement accelerates as they respond positively to these therapies.
- Teachers use a wide variety of resources to plan activities that engage pupils' interests and make learning accessible. Staff adapt the length of activities to match pupils' differing concentration spans. They design tasks skilfully to help pupils recall and build on their earlier learning. Teachers move learning on when pupils are ready for their next challenge. Increasingly, as pupils settle down, they rely less on support and work independently.
- Adults give pupils plentiful feedback throughout the lessons, helping them to improve their work. Teaching and therapy staff jointly review pupils' progress and levels of

engagement often and make adaptations as needed. As a result, pupils make substantial progress in meeting their ambitious targets.

- Teachers develop pupils' literacy and mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, pupils wrote interesting facts about the countries that they have learned about in geography. They practise their mathematical skills by measuring ingredients during their weekly cooking and baking sessions.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils typically arrive at this school with very low self-esteem as they were unsuccessful learners in their previous schools. Because of the high levels of care, bespoke therapies and curriculum, their confidence and self-belief markedly grow. As a result, they become successful learners.
- Leaders make sure that pupils have continual contact throughout the school day with professional therapists and well-trained teachers. In this way, leaders promote pupils' mental health and emotional well-being exceptionally well.
- Every day, pupils benefit from 'movement' lessons from occupational therapists. These sessions help pupils develop their gross and fine motor skills and, together with other opportunities for exercising, ensure that pupils keep fit. Pupils also learn that it is important to eat healthily, especially during their cooking lessons. In these ways, leaders assist pupils to understand how to keep physically healthy.
- Pupils enjoy the many opportunities for taking on responsibilities. Recently, pupils recorded a 'CGC News' programme. Some pupils filmed, others presented the school's news and some interviewed members of staff to seek their views about aspects of school life. Every year, in the build-up to Christmas, parents come to school and pupils take responsibility for arranging a raft of tasks and activities. Examples of these include arranging letter-writing to Santa, reading 'The Polar Express' to parents and singing carols. These opportunities play a major role in developing pupils' sense of self-worth, taking responsibility and contributing positively to the community.
- Leaders support parents and pupils with transition to new schools. Staff accompany parents to visit new potential schools and help them decide which school is best suited to their child's need. Leaders invite new school staff to come in and observe the pupils before they transfer. Staff from this school go with pupils to transitional visits and help them settle down in their new schools.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Typically, when pupils arrive at the school, they find it hard to behave well and settle down to learning. With patience and perseverance, therapists work with pupils to address their needs to overcome the barriers that limit their social and academic success. School records show that, as pupils respond to the therapies, they quickly improve their

behaviours. They settle down, try their very best and, over time, make very strong progress.

- When pupils lose concentration and start to get distracted, teachers and other adults skilfully refocus them on their learning. When adults see the potential for negative behaviour, they quickly and expertly intervene to diffuse the situation.
- Staff work closely with parents so that they too can play a part improving their children's behaviour. In addition to the personal support staff offer parents, a therapist recently delivered a parental workshop on how to manage children's challenging behaviour at home.
- Many pupils had poor attendance at their previous school. They enjoy coming to this school and attend regularly. Attendance rates are higher than at other similar schools nationally.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Leaders set ambitious targets for pupils' progress and outcomes in all academic subjects, as well as in their behaviour and personal and social development.
- Teachers, therapists and leaders check these targets regularly to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress in their learning. If they find that a pupil is not making excellent progress, they consider how to better meet their needs in order to facilitate effective learning. As a result, pupils catch up quickly.
- School records show the exceedingly positive impact of therapeutic activities. Pupils make substantial improvements in their personal development and behaviour. Furthermore, as a result of those improvements, they make very strong and sustained progress in their learning across subjects. This is evident in the range and increasing quality of work that pupils produce.
- Staff entered pupils for a national young writers' competition that attracted over 4,000 entries. On the last day of the inspection, leaders received confirmation that some of the entries from this school have been chosen for publication.
- Leaders prepare pupils extremely well for the next stage of their education. By the time they leave the school, they have benefited from highly effectual therapies and teaching. These lead to outstanding improvements in pupils' social and academic progress. This is a credit to the very effective work of all the staff at the school.

School details

Unique reference number	131662
DfE registration number	212/6001
Inspection number	10067150

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	Primary day special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	47
Proprietor	Elizabeth Hartman
Headteacher	Jessica Duemler
Annual fees (day pupils)	£37,575.00–£79,500.00
Telephone number	020 8946 8330
Website	www.chelseachildren.com
Email address	information@chelseachildren.com
Date of previous inspection	20–22 January 2016

Information about this school

- The Chelsea Group of Children is an independent special school which offers day provision for boys and girls aged between four and 11 years in the borough of Wandsworth.
- Currently, there are 47 pupils on roll. Pupils are placed at the school by 13 London boroughs.
- All pupils experience developmental delay and have mild to moderate and complex learning needs. About half have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school aims to 'meet each pupil's unique developmental, behavioural and emotional needs and develop their cognitive abilities through the development of a firm foundation of skills'.

- The school has a team of seven full-time therapists (four occupational and three speech and language therapists) who are part of the teaching team.
- The school's last standard inspection was in January 2016, when it was judged to be good.
- The school had a material change inspection in May 2017, after which its registered maximum capacity increased from 40 to 48 pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's prior notice.
- The inspector observed learning and therapies in several sessions, all of which were visited with the headteacher.
- The inspector scrutinised samples of pupils' work. He checked the school's information about pupils' progress.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, other leaders, members of staff and the proprietor. He spoke with pupils during social times and lessons.
- The inspector considered the 14 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, which included some free-text responses. He also had formal conversations with six parents. The inspector took account of 32 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector checked documentation, policies and all aspects of the school's work for compliance with the independent school standards.
- This report is unable to include information on the progress and behaviour of the extremely small number of early years children, as this would identify them individually.

Inspection team

David Radomsky, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019