

Tanglewood Nursery School

Melbourne Avenue, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 2DX

Inspection dates

10–11 July 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

- Children are exceptionally happy at Tanglewood Nursery. They develop independence and confidence in their time at the school and are well prepared to move to primary school.
- The teaching, support and guidance that children receive are of an extremely high standard and enable them to make excellent progress in all areas of their learning.
- Leaders have high expectations of what children can achieve. These aspirations are shared by all the adults, who work very well as a team to plan, support and challenge each child as an individual.
- There is a clear focus throughout all teaching on expanding children's vocabulary. Adults model clear speaking and encourage children to engage in discussion using clear speech.
- Children's imagination and curiosity are encouraged well by the range of open-ended activities on offer at all times. They develop strong physical skills through building and climbing. They become independent and focus on their chosen activities well.
- The governing body has taken effective action in the last year to develop its practice and provides strong support and challenge to school leaders.
- Leaders have created a cohesive community of which parents and carers are a key part. The parents feel very well supported and involved in their children's early education. They are all extremely positive about the experience of their children at Tanglewood.
- There is a greater-than-average proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These children are fully included in school life and make excellent progress from their starting points.
- As with virtually all of the children, the most able are very well prepared for primary school. However, there is not enough emphasis on them starting to use correct letter formation to represent initial sounds.
- In mathematics, the most able do not have enough opportunities to link numerals to objects or represent numbers in different ways.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the early reading and writing of the most able by having a greater emphasis on children using clearly identifiable letters to represent sounds.
- Extend the most able children's use of number by providing more opportunities to match numerals to groups of objects and represent numbers in different ways.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher has been in post for nearly two years. She has established high expectations of what children should experience in their time in school. Together with the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, she has created a strong team which shares this ethos.
- Many children enter the school with poor speech and language skills for their age. Leaders have prioritised communication and language development. They have trained adults to be able to model and effectively develop strong speech and language throughout the day. Leaders work hard with parents to support them in developing their children's speech.
- Leaders of mathematics have made sure that it is woven throughout the school day. This is enhanced by focused mathematics fortnights and specific workshops for parents on how to support early mathematics with their children.
- Parents are, without exception, positive about the school. They value the approachability of the leadership team. This strong working relationship has supported occasions when leaders need to have more difficult conversations with families about attendance or safeguarding concerns. Parents who have children with SEND know that leaders will do their utmost to provide the children with the care and support they need.
- The special educational needs coordinator is knowledgeable and ensures that provision for children with SEND is of a very high standard. Staff follow a simple, but consistent, planning cycle that checks that individual children's next steps are met. Continual professional development around meeting the needs of those with SEND is a priority and, as a consequence, staff are adept at meeting these children's needs.
- The school has 16 places funded by the local authority for children with significant speech and language disorders. These children are part of a mainstream classroom but also access the school's 'Rainbow Room'. In here, specialist speech and language therapists and learning support assistants ensure that children access targeted therapy to develop their skills, which are then further embedded and applied through the mainstream setting.
- In addition to the school's speech and language centre, there is also a mainstream speech and language therapist and a speech and language learning support assistant who identify and support children to develop their speech, language and communication skills throughout the school.
- The early years pupil premium funding is spent well. An emphasis on developing vocabulary and children's confidence has meant that the achievement of those eligible for the funding in the key areas of communication and language and personal, social and emotional development is above those not eligible for the funding.
- The curriculum is led by children's interests but based around the early years foundation stage (EYFS) framework. Leaders ensure that children learn about things

that are unfamiliar to them by building in experiences linked to books they have read and finding out about different cultures' celebrations.

- The school offers outreach support to other early years settings in schools. They work closely with other maintained nurseries. Staff gain from this professional development, developing their understanding of good practice in both early years and primary. Training is well planned and comprehensive, particularly in preparing to support children with complex SEND. Teachers are encouraged to be innovative, developing ideas and then sharing success with colleagues.
- British values are taught to children through the emphasis on respecting each other, being kind and listening to people who might not agree with you.

Governance of the school

- Since the short inspection of the school in November, governors have undertaken a thorough review of their own practice. They have a clear action plan linked to the school improvement plan. They make sure that they are up to date in local and national issues by attending regular training.
- Governors reviewed the use of governor visits, which were previously friendly but not necessarily always useful strategically. They now go in with a clear idea of what the visit is aiming to find out, challenge or support. Where questions remain unanswered, governors make sure that they find out before reporting back to the main governing body. This makes them exceptionally effective in providing strong governance.
- The governors ensure that additional funding, such as the early years pupil premium and SEND funding, is used effectively. They take time to explore data on children's progress and achievement, checking for the impact of this spending.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding is of the utmost importance to every adult in the school. Children are kept very safe in their time in the school. Staff are clear on what to do if they have a concern about a child. Records show that these are dealt with by leaders in a timely and appropriate way.
- Leaders have ensured that staff receive both yearly and more regular updates on potential risks to children. They have also provided support for parents on how to keep their children safe online.
- All ratios for children to adults are more than met. Additional adults support those children with complex SEND. Regular checks are made of the learning areas.
- All appropriate employment checks have been made on adults who are regularly in the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching across the school, from all adults, is of a consistently high standard. Leaders have invested time over several years in ensuring that all staff have highly developed skills in spotting learning opportunities and building on these with children.
- Planning is led by the children's own interests and adults react to events that happen as they go, building in learning, for example when building ramps with the children to race cars down, then using chalk to write 1st, 2nd and 3rd on the floor and matching the cars to their position after each race.
- Whole-class learning led by the teacher often starts with an object hidden inside a bucket. The children watch and listen with an extremely high level of engagement while the teacher describes and demonstrates the object, for example an alien, modelling high use of relevant vocabulary. Children with speech and language delay have these sessions enhanced by the integral use of signing.
- Teachers show children activities that they might take part in linked to the object in the bucket, for example making a space picture linked to the alien. Children confidently have a go in front of the class. These linked activities are chosen by many children in their play later on.
- There is a high focus on expanding children's vocabulary. Each week, the teaching introduces new key words, which are revisited several times. The most able are challenged with more difficult words and those with SEND may focus on understanding more simple words but words that are key to the story or focus activity. This approach is used in both the class for two- to three-year-olds and the classes for three- to five-year-olds, providing consistency as children move through the school.
- Adults use their own strong knowledge of the individual children to propose new activities or develop learning in play. They also assess attainment in detail against the EYFS framework to check that children's needs are met. Leaders check on this and, together with the other adults, plan for any interventions required.
- Staff encourage children to write their own names and to use initial letter sounds in early writing. They use a variety of strategies to encourage good pencil grip. The most able are taught some early phonics sounds but do not see enough examples of correct letter formation to be confident using this in their own writing.
- Mathematics is woven throughout the school day. There is a high emphasis on counting and ordering numbers. Most children can recognise numerals up to 10. However, there is not enough use made of linking the numerals to groups of objects or of showing numbers in different ways, for example as dots or as plastic tiles.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Teachers build on opportunities to extend the children's understanding of the world through the activities chosen and the books read to children. They take part in celebrations from around the world, including Diwali and a Holi colour run. Parents with

links to elsewhere come in to talk to children, for example about Chinese New Year.

- Risk-taking in a controlled way is encouraged. Children construct and climb over bridges in the forest garden. They use simple tools and are taught how to use these safely. For example, in the three- to five-year-old classes, children were using junior hacksaws, and in the two- to three-year-old class, an adult supported children to cut real food up in the role-play area using a knife.
- Children develop high levels of independence in their time at the school. They move around the site and between classrooms on their own, choosing from the many activities on offer at any time or going to visit the library to enjoy a book.
- Children are encouraged to be healthy. There are many opportunities for physical play and movement. Snacks are both healthy and attractive. Children are encouraged to sit still to eat and take time to rest. When it is sunny, they are taught about keeping out of the sun and drinking enough water.
- The following is typical of comments from parents:

'Tanglewood Nursery is a brilliant school and has given my child a fantastic foundation to build upon when they move to primary school in September. Over this last year, my child has grown in confidence and has become much more independent. The speech and language support my child has received from the specialist learning support assistant and speech therapist has been excellent, and my child has developed incredibly over his time here.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Children are extremely well behaved. When they are joining in a class session, sitting on the carpet, they listen to the adults with rapt attention. They are polite and do not shout over others.
- When playing, children play in mixed-gender groups. They cooperate and work together on challenges. Children do not take any notice of the differences between them in race, gender or additional needs. Children focus on activities and are resilient, for example not giving up when constructing a bridge between two platforms.
- When they sit together for snack time, they are quiet, take turns and show good manners.
- A very few children with SEND find it hard to join in with whole-class sessions. Support staff make sure that they do not miss out on the learning that others have experienced and build in activities for those children that create similar awe and wonder.
- In the two- to three-year-old class, where – given their age – children can occasionally have arguments over sharing, these are dealt with gently. Adults show the children what they might say if it happens again.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Children often start the school with attainment below what is expected for their age. They leave Tanglewood exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education, having made excellent progress. They are independent and able to put on and take off clothes and shoes. They can recognise their names and many can write these as well, using the correct pencil grip.
- Children are confident, move around the school on their own and talk to different adults. They can sit and concentrate in a group session on the carpet. They focus on activities for extended periods with interest.
- Most children can join in with counting rhymes and songs. They count objects in order and recognise numbers to 10.
- Children make excellent progress across all prime areas of learning, developing strong physical and artistic skills. They have a wide understanding of the world around them, including people who are different to themselves.
- Some children with SEND are not as ready as others for school but make strong progress from their own starting points. Adults ensure that they too develop the skills to concentrate, albeit for shorter periods.
- As a consequence of the highly targeted work and provision for children eligible for the early years pupil premium, disadvantaged children, who often have very low speech and language skills when they start school, move to achieving above the rest of the cohort in communication and language and personal, social and emotional development by the end of their time in school.
- Children in the two- to three-year-old class are also well prepared to move up to the main nursery at the end of their time there. They take part in group activities and are tolerant of others. They know routines and follow these without being reminded.

School details

Unique reference number	114698
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10091018

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	2 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann Davidson
Headteacher	Deborah Watson
Telephone number	01245 352 788
Website	www.tanglewoodnurseryschool.co.uk
Email address	admin@tanglewood.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 November 2018

Information about this school

- There are three classes in the three- to five-year-old section and one class in the two- to three-year-old section, Little Tanglewood.
- The school runs two sessions daily in both sections of the school, morning and afternoon. Children either attend morning or afternoon. Some children in Little Tanglewood attend part-time.
- The school has a speech and language centre, funded in partnership by the local authority and the healthcare service, Provide. This is staffed by specialist speech and language therapists working alongside speech and language learning support assistants.
- The school holds the enhanced healthy schools award.
- The school works closely with other local schools in the Tanglewood Partnership.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place after the previous section 8 inspection had found that the school had potentially improved significantly overall since the previous section 5 inspection.
- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in every class. Some of these observations were undertaken alongside members of the senior leadership team.
- A wide range of children's learning journals were looked at by the inspection team.
- The inspection team met with representatives from the governing body. They met with senior leaders, middle leaders and other teachers and also considered the 25 responses to the staff survey.
- The inspection team scrutinised the school's website and a range of documents, including assessment information and the school's self-evaluation.
- The 17 responses made by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered. The inspection team also spoke to some parents before school.

Inspection team

Tessa Holledge, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lesley Stevens

Ofsted Inspector

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