

Inspection of St Mark's Hall Nursery School Ltd

St Marks Church, London NW1 7TN

Inspection date: 28 September 2021

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children thrive at this friendly, welcoming nursery school. They have strong emotional bonds with staff, who have a thorough awareness of children's individual needs. Staff carefully plan activities which target children's development and interests. Children engross themselves in activities, displaying sustained concentration, persistence and focus. They are enormously keen to share experiences with each other, staff and visitors. Children are extremely proud of their achievements, displaying high self-esteem and emotional well-being. Children have impeccable manners and listen intently to each other. They show high levels of respect, care and empathy as they play sociably together. They settle disputes using words and quiet, gentle voices.

Staff are passionate and offer excellent support in helping new children settle in. This ensures staff get to know the children and families very well. As a result, children are confident to leave parents and immerse themselves in nursery life. Children's interests are incorporated into the rich curriculum which strengthens their understanding of the world. As staff know the children so well, they are consistently able to meet their individual needs. Children make outstanding progress.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Parents are keen to share how wonderful the nursery and staff are. They say, 'The staff are very special – they tap into each child's personality and potential.' Families value the community that the nursery has created and feel involved in nursery life. Communication between parents and the nursery is excellent. Staff are approachable and make time to talk to parents, offering guidance and reassurance as well as home learning which supports the curriculum at nursery.
- Children have an incredibly wide vocabulary and are keen to engage in conversations. They share their thoughts and ideas enthusiastically. For example, children show visitors their drawings and explain what is happening in them. Children are curious and eager to know about the world around them. Staff introduce new words. They encourage children to join in with poems and rhymes and ask interesting questions which build on the quality of children's language.
- Children are highly confident and self-assured. Their achievements are celebrated. For example, they receive certificates during morning assembly to acknowledge tasks such as painting, being helpful or settling in well.
- Children have vast opportunities to be creative and use their imaginations. Older children use scissors to cut shapes and make collages and younger children use chalks on the paving outside in the garden. Children develop their vocabulary as they are asked to give meaning to their drawings and staff write their responses.

- Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. They gently remind children how to show friendly behaviour. For example, they talk about smiling and being engaging with one another. Staff encourage children to copy the 'Mona Lisa's smile'. Children know what is expected of them and staff encourage them to talk about their feelings during small group activities.
- The headteacher and his staff are highly reflective and work very well in partnership with each other. Staff know instinctively when their colleagues need support. They are continually setting in motion ambitious ideas for improvement. Staff regularly adapt the organisation of the setting to support all children's changing needs. The staff team are passionate about their roles and highly value the excellent support from the headteacher.
- Staff have developed an ambitious, well-structured curriculum that builds children's learning step-by-step. They monitor children's progress exceptionally well, to ensure all are well supported for the next steps in their learning.
- Children frequently have opportunities to use their physical skills. Regular dance and yoga sessions, daily stretching activities and time in the beautiful garden help them develop their large-muscle skills. Staff are highly attentive and encourage children to stretch themselves and try new things, such as climbing up the slide.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The headteacher and staff describe the signs and symptoms that might cause them to worry about a child's welfare. They know what to do about their concerns and demonstrate their understanding of the setting's safeguarding policies and procedures. Staff have exceedingly strong bonds with children. They monitor their emotional well-being to ensure they promptly respond to each child's individual needs. Staff keep their understanding updated by attending safeguarding training and through regular staff meetings. The headteacher ensures that recruitment procedures are robust and that staff are suitable to work with children.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY552938
Local authority	Camden
Inspection number	10174332
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	33
Name of registered person	St Marks Hall Nursery School Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP552937
Telephone number	0207 483 0340
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

St Marks Hall Nursery School Ltd registered in 2017. It operates from a contained unit in St Marks Church in Primrose Hill in the London Borough of Camden. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 9am to 3.30pm, during term time. There are seven members of staff, six of whom hold an early years qualification at level 2 or above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Anna Hindhaugh-Feldman

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The provider and the inspector completed a learning walk to review how the curriculum meets children's learning and development.
- The inspector carried out joint observations with the provider to review the quality of teaching.
- The inspector spoke to, and read online views from, parents about the nursery, including how staff have helped them continue their children's learning at home.
- Children talked with the inspector about what they enjoy doing at nursery.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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