

Inspection of an outstanding school: Alice Model Nursery School

14 Beaumont Grove, Stepney, London E1 4NQ

Inspection date: 7 October 2021

Outcome

Alice Model Nursery School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

It is no surprise that so many parents and carers have nothing but wonderful things to say about this school. It is a vibrant and exciting place where everyone is committed to children's learning and well-being. All staff are focused on helping every child to achieve highly from whatever their starting point is.

Each part of the nursery enables children to experience all areas of learning. Everything is easily accessible. Children know where to find the toys, reading books and equipment they want to use. Even those that are new to the school quickly find their feet.

Children are safe and happy. They behave very well and are fully involved in meaningful learning experiences from the moment they arrive. Although bullying is not an issue, children learn to be kind and how to look after each other.

From the settling-in period onwards, staff work closely with parents every step of the way. Staff share children's achievements with parents regularly. Parents and children love the red 'special books' which capture children's achievements and milestones.

Because of the excellent start they have here, children are more than ready for the move to primary school.

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

Leaders have maintained high standards throughout the school. Staff are highly experienced. They know how children learn and develop. They are skilled at making sure that what happens in the nursery builds on what children already know and can do.

Staff plan a curriculum that focuses on children's next steps in each area of learning. But children also have excellent opportunities to explore and find things out for themselves.

For example, they had great fun mixing the coloured dyes into different buckets of water. Staff encouraged them to use words accurately, such as 'pour' and 'mix'.

The two-year-old provision caters very well for this age group. Children enjoyed moving the toy mouse up and down the clock in time with the rhyme 'Hickory, Dickory, Dock'. Children enjoy listening to staff as they sing. They explore sounds as they move from one area to another. Staff provide a range of activities that help children to strengthen their bodies, such as the climbing ladders.

Staff listen to what children say and do. They know when to step in and when to step back. They support children's language skills very well. In doing so, staff use high-quality texts which children learn by heart. As one member of staff put it, 'We want all children to fall in love with books'. Children enjoyed tasting the pineapple and mango that feature in 'Handa's Surprise'. They used toys and costumes to retell the story and remembered which animal took which piece of fruit from Handa's basket. In another group, children had great fun remembering the different rooms in which 'Mr Bear' tried to get some sleep. They used percussion instruments enthusiastically to enhance the story.

Staff meet regularly to discuss each child's progress. Staff are particularly effective at identifying and supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have funded extra time from the speech and language therapist to make sure that these children get the support they need.

Staff support children's wider development. Children take part in sessions with musicians, including drummers and cellists. The recent trip to the Tower of London has sparked much enthusiasm for treasure, crowns and all things royal. This is making counting even more fun because children take great pleasure in counting the jewels and gems into and out of their individual treasure chests.

Although bullying does not happen, staff are skilled at helping children to understand how their actions might upset others. Children play and learn happily with their friends. They are keen and motivated. In the pretend kitchen, for example, children negotiated who should do which job in order to prepare lunch for their friends. They share the equipment well and concentrate on the task in hand. Staff are never too far away when children need a gentle reminder about how to take turns.

Leaders take staff well-being seriously. Staff really enjoy working here and feel very well supported in all aspects of their work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff meet together each day to discuss how each child is getting on. These meetings provide an opportunity for staff to raise any concerns about a child's welfare. Staff are well trained to be alert to the signs that young children might be at risk from harm. They help children to understand right from wrong.

Leaders keep up to date with what is happening locally and nationally. They are aware of the risks that children, their older siblings and their families might face. Leaders work closely with others, including the local authority, to get families the help they 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 2012.

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	100887
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10209390
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	43
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Iain Chambers
Headteacher	Lynn Cottle
Website	alicemodel.weebly.com
Date of previous inspection	10 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Alice Model Nursery School is located in Stepney Green. It has provision for two-year-old children. The governing body manages the school's breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The headteacher also leads another nursery school in the local authority. She is supported by two part-time deputy headteachers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: language and communication, including reading; personal, social and emotional development; and understanding the world. For each deep dive, inspectors looked at curriculum plans and spoke with leaders and different members of staff. Inspectors looked at these areas of

learning in action. Inspectors spoke to leaders and staff to understand how the nursery meets the needs of individual children, including those with SEND. Inspectors looked at examples of children's achievements, including their special books and learning records.

- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about other areas of learning.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding procedures. They checked the school's single central record of staff suitability and held meetings with leaders, staff and governors about safeguarding.
- Inspectors met with staff. They spoke with staff and children informally throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors met with parents as they dropped their children to school. Inspectors reviewed the two free-text comments to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Gary Rawlings, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sean Flood

Ofsted Inspector

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