

Inspection of an outstanding school: Church Hill Nursery School

Woodbury Road, Walthamstow, London E17 9SB

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2022

Outcome

Church Hill Nursery School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children at Church Hill Nursery get an exceptional start to their education. They love coming to school and separate from their parents and carers quickly. Children are keen to get on and explore the exciting environment.

The nursery has an excellent local reputation. Parents spoken to, including those who responded to Ofsted's surveys, were overwhelmingly positive about the school. They appreciate the 'safe, enabling environment' that staff provide.

Children behave impeccably. Staff teach children to communicate their feelings and solve conflicts positively. Bullying is extremely rare and would be dealt with swiftly, were it to occur.

Leaders have high expectations of children and focus on building their resilience and independence. Two-year-olds have their own cosy space to start the day. They quickly settle there and later enjoy exploring the wider nursery provision both indoors and outside. They rarely need to seek adult reassurance.

Children of all ages are engrossed in activities and often remain from start to finish. They are very well prepared for Reception Year. Leaders make sure that children have the necessary knowledge, love of learning and independence to thrive.

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

Leaders and staff are highly ambitious for all children, regardless of their background or educational needs. They have considered carefully what children need to learn to be ready for Reception Year and have created a broad, rich and exciting curriculum.

Staff are experts in effective early years practice. They provide an environment, indoors and out, that fuels children's curiosity. Staff use every opportunity during children's play to build children's knowledge. For example, in mathematics, children learn to estimate in the

sandpit, explore quantities when using modelling clay and to count shades of colour on the art table. Staff skilfully adjust activities and their interactions with children to maximise learning.

Reading is prioritised by all adults. Children enjoy reading a wide variety of books. Younger children are building their understanding of phonics through rhyme and song, while some older children are starting to blend the sounds they have learned. For example, during a phonics session, one child explained that 'p-a-t is "pat", who also has a friend called "mat", the word we made earlier'.

Older children have a sophisticated understanding of story structure. This is because practitioners use a systematic teaching approach. Children enjoy using this structure to tell stories. For example, one child told the inspector, 'The lion has a problem and the fox has a solution.'

Leaders have focused on making sure that children are able to communicate and use language confidently. Staff are excellent role models when interacting with children. The very youngest children are beginning to use words and short phrases. Older children speak in complex sentences. They enjoy sharing what they observe, for example, 'She is doing it all by herself!'

Provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is exemplary. Staff know children and their families extremely well and build strong, trusting relationships. They are skilled at identifying children's specific needs early. They put the necessary adaptations in place to ensure that these children enjoy the same curriculum as their peers and join in with all aspects of school life.

Leaders provide a range of rich experiences beyond the curriculum. During the pandemic, leaders provided enrichment activities in children's homes through an innovative play-bag project. More recently, an art project is enabling children to work creatively with older children and young adults. Educational visits are very well attended by parents. Staff select venues that parents can then visit independently with their children.

Staff are proud to work at the school and most have worked there for many years. They feel well supported by leaders and appreciate the strong team ethos. Staff value the training offered and feel confident in carrying out their roles.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know children and their families extremely well. They understand the types of risk children may face. Leaders are knowledgeable and persistent. They work effectively with external agencies to provide the help children need.

Leaders make sure that staff receive regular training and updates. Staff are clear about their recording and reporting responsibilities.

Children are learning how to express their feelings and take safe risks. They trust staff and seek help when needed.

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 a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in September 2016.

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	103028
Local authority	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Inspection number	10199964
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	107
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Pauline France
Headteacher	Helen Currie
Website	www.fans.waltham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 September 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school admits children from the age of two.
- The school runs a breakfast and an after-school club.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke to school leaders about all aspects of school life. She also met with a group of governors (including the chair of governors and a parent governor), a representative from the local authority and the school's school improvement consultant.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development, and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector spoke to leaders, visited lessons and spoke to teachers and

children. She also looked at how well the school promotes the development of early reading.

- The inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other areas of learning.
- The inspector considered a range of evidence relating to safeguarding. This included speaking to leaders (including governors) and staff about safeguarding procedures. She also checked key records and documentation.
- The inspector considered the views of parents who were gathered at the school gates, as well as responses to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Helen Morrison, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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 <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022